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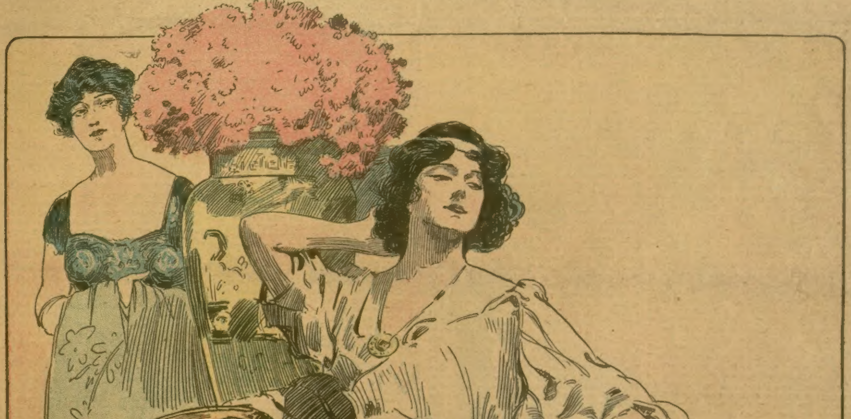

The Quadroon's Hate

Or,

One Man's Folly

By Ella Martin

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CHAPTER I.

A DELAYED WEDDING.

FAIR as a lily and sweet as a rose," was Ila Hastings, Lloyd Charlston's prospective bride, on that eventful night in June. Her hair was the color of ripe corn, and her eyes were as blue as the edelweiss of her dead mother's native country. Her firm white skin possessed the delicate tint of the wild rose, while the color of her curved lips was a shade or two deeper. Transplanted from a Northern State to the sunny Southland when a mere child, she was the favorite of all who knew her. Intelligent, witty, with a bright face and a smile for every one, she gradually had come to be the attraction of every gathering, and her society was sought by both men and women of her set.

Ila's father, a Southern gentleman of wealth, after some years spent in the North, where he had met and married her mother, had, after the death of his wife, returned to his ancestral home, taking his child with him. A year later he had wedded a Southern belle, the exact opposite of his first wife in appearance and temperament. In due time a second daughter was born to him.

The child of the second marriage, whom they had named Lois, was of the dark Southern type of beauty, and resembled her mother in features and temperament. From early childhood the two girls were passionately fond of each other. Ila had won her way into the heart of her gracious and dignified stepmother, and Mrs. Hastings had brought her own daughter up to reverence her elder sister.

But despite the good-will of the household toward the gentle girl, it was because of the stern, unrelenting pressure brought to bear upon her that Ila Hastings was to become a bride that night. The wedding was a mercenary affair, arranged by her father, for, tho Mr. Hastings was supposed to be wealthy, he was on the verge of bankruptcy. And to give Ila in marriage to one whose estate joined his own, and whose financial affairs were on a solid foundation, was his idea of doing the very best he knew how for his daughter's welfare. He only hoped he would be able to do as well for Lois when her time came to be settled in life.

Hastings Place, a roomy mansion, with many porticoes, was nestled in the depths of a grove of orange trees. On this night—the night of the wedding, which was to prove eventful in more ways than one—the house was filled with guests assembled to witness the nuptials of the most popular couple in all the surrounding country. There were jests and merry laughter in the drawing-rooms while awaiting the arrival of the bridegroom. The bride-elect was in her chamber, supposably in the hands of her maids, who were to attire her in her wedding finery. But in truth, her sister, who was to be chief bridesmaid, was the only one with the bride at that moment; tho from across the corridor came the low hum of voices and the sound of laughter, merry but subdued. Ila's maid, a mulatto girl named Electra, had laid out the wedding gown with its accessories, after which she had been dismissed by her mistress.

Ila preferred to be alone with her sister, and that Lois should dress her for the wedding. She felt that she could not endure the light chatter of her several bridesmaids. The door had barely closed on the retreating form of the mulatto when Ila turned abruptly to her sister.

"Lois, dear girl," she whispered tensely, "if only I might give him to you! It is you who love him—I have known it all along. You could not hide your heart from me, dear. Oh, Lois! you must hate me for this—for taking him away from you! I hate myself for being wheedled into giving my hand where my heart cannot go. You know where my heart is, Lois! Oh, dear sister, is there no help for me? Think of something, Lois—think of some way to save me, even at the eleventh hour!"

Lois Hastings stood like one dazed in the center of the dainty boudoir which she and Ila shared together, her hands clinched at her sides. Her dark, slumberous eyes were stormy, her red lips set in a tense line.

"Yes, I love him," she admitted, her voice passionate, despairing, "but he loves you, and I am no dog in the manger. If I cannot wed him myself I am willing that the sister whom I love shall become his bride. My only regret is that you do not care for him."

Ila's eyes grew moist.

"Dear sister," she murmured, "how unselfish you are! I have wondered so much at his choice, for it was you he *seemed to love. I always thought it was you whom he would choose. I cannot understand it, except that I see our father's hand in this match.* You know how it is, Lois; I am powerless to do otherwise."

"If only you loved him," Lois moaned, "I could bear it then!"

"I might have done so, perhaps, had my heart not been given to another. Had we never made that Western trip, where I met and learned to love Cecil Lynd, and saw what life was like out on the boundless prairies. How green the grass was that summer, how blue the sky! And the cowboys and their herds! Ah, that was life!"

"I have never asked you, Ila, but were you and Cecil Lynd betrothed?"

"Not exactly. He spoke to father, but was informed that he had other views for his daughter. You remember the unconventional life of the ranch was not to our father's liking. There was not enough of that which he termed culture for a gentleman born and bred in the South. I begged him to permit me to follow the dictates of my affections. But you remember how sternly he commanded me to make ready for the journey home. Aunt Ruth interceded for me, for she had known Cecil a long time, and knew that he was worthy, and mother was willing. I think, Lois, she looked for a union between you and Lloyd Charlston then. And it seems to me such a union would have answered the same purpose of straightening out father's financial tangle. It is not too late yet, sister. Put on the bridal gown," urged Ila. "The lights will be dim in the chapel, and no one will discover the change of brides until it is too late. Then Lloyd will understand that you loved him better than I did. You can explain how it is with me—that my heart is elsewhere. When he learns it is you he has wedded, and that I have never loved him, he will be glad of the substitution. I am sure it is you he truly loves."

A bitter laugh left Lois' lips.

"You are like a drowning man grasping a straw, Ila. In your desperate need it seems a way of escape. It is a wild idea and futile. It cannot be."

"Tell me, then," cried Ila, "tell me quickly, for time is passing—how I may escape! I cannot do it, Lois! I cannot go on with it! Oh, why did I not rebel at the outset? Why did I let them place me in the position in which I find myself tonight?"

"Because it is not in you to rebel, my gentle sister. In your place I should have destroyed myself or have murdered the man they tried to thrust upon me. If I had loved another as you love Cecil I should have married him in opposition to all the world. My father's wishes, even his commands, would not have had a feather's weight with me. Don't look so shocked, Ila. No one has a right to coerce one's love any more than one's conscience. You are like your mother, perhaps, a calm, cool-blooded girl of Northern birth. I am like both my parents, and the blood of old Spain was in the veins of my ancestors."

Lois Hastings looked, as she stood with her dark head thrown back, as if she might in truth possess the temperament she credited herself with having. Ila had always known that her sister was spirited, but when she heard her proclaim her rebelliousness so vehemently she gazed upon her in unbelieving wonderment.

"Oh, Lois," she cried, "I wish I were as brave as you! I would defy them all at this late hour!"

There in the beautifully appointed boudoir, off of which opened the bedchamber wherein lay the bridal robes, the two girls stood and gazed helplessly at each other. Both started when a low tap sounded upon the closed door. Was it time to go down already, and the bride not yet robed for the sacrifice? Ila stood white and trembling, uttering no word. The sickness of dread was upon her, enveloping her like a mantle. She had not fully realized until this moment how utterly obnoxious this union was to her.

It was Lois, her dusky head held high, who opened the door in answer to the cautious rap. Electra, the mulatto maid, so recently dismissed, stood in the doorway.

"We want more time—tell them so!" Lois exclaimed, without waiting for the other to deliver her message. "My sister is not ready. Let the bridegroom wait if he is already come."

The girl did not speak, but glided in and closed the door behind her. She approached Ila, who stood in dazed silence, and placed a scrap of paper in her listless hand. Then putting her finger to her lips as if to enjoin silence, she glided noiselessly from the room.

Lois, seeing her sister scanning the writing on the paper with eager eyes, stepped to the door and locked it. Then she turned and waited. Ila saw the expectant look in her eyes and drew nearer, the letter fluttering from her hand.

"It is the way of escape," she whispered tensely, "the way Heaven has opened up for me! I will not explain, so that you may be able to say truthfully that you do not know what has become of me. Here," she added, snatching up the scrap of paper—the key to her words—"take this, and later, when you think best, read it. It will tell the story to you. But keep my secret Lois."

Lois took the crumpled note and hid it in her bosom.

"Your secret is safe with me, Ila. When I have read the note I will destroy it, and my heart shall keep its contents as silent as the grave."

"Our father would kill me if he knew. Is your promise a vow, my sister?"

"Aye, a vow! You know me, Ila."

"Then God bless you—and good-by! We shall meet under happier circumstances, I trust."

The two girls, so unlike in looks and temperament, exchanged a hasty embrace. Then Ila turned and darted into the closet and took from a hook a dark cloak and veil, donning them hurriedly. She did not even glance at the bridal finery as she passed thru the bedroom, nor note the breath of fragrance from the wreath of orange blossoms. In her haste she nearly forgot the fate that lately menaced her.

Down a back staircase and out into the shadow of the orange trees Ila crept cautiously, and passed unobserved thru the grounds on her way to the Crossroads, a quarter of a mile distant.

She drew a long breath. She was safe now, for a passing cloud obscured the moon and hid her fleeting form from those who would have detained her, had they known—had they even dreamed of her flight.

CHAPTER II.

THE NOTE DISCOVERED.

IT WAS the hour appointed for the wedding, but the bridegroom had not arrived. The guests were becoming restless when the sound of his car drew them to the front entrance, eager to welcome him. Some trouble with his machine had delayed him, Lloyd Charlston, explained briefly. It was a plausible excuse, and it also accounted for his disheveled appearance. He was unaccompanied by chauffeur or attendant of any sort, his best man having arrived before him.

This Lloyd Charleston was dark-skinned but handsome of features. His personality was the sort that encompassed one and made him his admirer as long as he was in his society. Not a few persons, however, experienced a reaction of feelings the moment they were out of his presence.

Just now he was the center of attraction, and passed thru the crowd of waiting guests on the portico, on into the hall, and calmly and without remark rearranged his elegant attire before the hall-tree mirror. This attended to, he became profuse in his apologies for having kept them waiting, but made no further explanation as to why he was detained. When informed that he was in plenty of time, as his bride-elect had sent down word that she was not yet ready, his black eyes lighted with suspicion.

Mr. Hastings was apparently nervous, but called a servant and directed that Mr. Charlston be shown to his room. The latter turned to follow the servant reluctantly and in some wonderment. There was something amiss—he knew it intuitively. He turned to his prospective father-in-law.

"My compliments to Miss Hastings," he said with a forced smile, so that his teeth gleamed white beneath the black of his mustache. "And will you kindly inform her that I am awaiting her pleasure?"

"I will send you word the moment my daughter is in readiness," Mr. Hastings replied, with careful politeness. "A fainting spell, I believe, delayed her toilet."

He stood and watched the tall figure in its conventional wedding apparel ascend the broad, oaken staircase and disappear from sight around the turn of the first landing. Then he turned abruptly and made his way to the drawing-rooms. A colored boy in livery stood in the aperture between the spacious apartments, and he touched him lightly on the arm.

"Go find your mistress and bring her to me without attracting the attention of the guests," he commanded, in a low tone. "Understand? Tell her I await her in her private boudoir."

"Yes, marse," and the well-trained lad moved away.

Mr. Hastings waited only long enough to note that the boy was edging thru the gathering unnoticed. Then he mounted the great stairway and entered his wife's apartment. A few minutes later a tall, well-preserved woman, handsomely attired for the occasion of the wedding, made her appearance. Her dark eyes expressed wonderment and anxiety. Mr. Hastings went straight to the point.

"Clarice, what is delaying Ila? The time for the wedding is long since past. I know that she is averse to this marriage, but she would hardly dare draw back now. Still, something may have happened at the last moment to upset all my plans. You know how I have set my heart upon this union. Charlston cannot refuse coming to my assistance once he is in the family, and he will scarcely miss the money which I so sorely need to set me on my feet again."

The face of his wife was stony when he began. Her lips were drawn in a tense line, her eyes brooding. But her whole manner became eager when he had finished.

"Brandon," she said, in tones so low they would never have reached his hearing but for their clearness, "I have loved Ila as my own daughter, and I have aided and abetted you in your plans until I saw how repulsive the whole thing was to the gentle girl whose heart is elsewhere."

"Ah, I know where her heart is!" he interrupted. "But did you ever guess why I objected to her union with Cecil Lynd? I have no time to go into details now; but will say this, that there was a feud between his parents and mine. Besides, I was even then planning to get the Charlston millions into the family, as you know. There are things in Loyd's life that would not bear inspection, perhaps, but they were follies of his early youth. Any man is apt to settle down after winning the woman he loves."

"I had not quite finished what I have to say," Mrs. Hastings returned. "I helped overpersuade Ila to obey you until I learned that she must needs tread on her sister's heart on her way to the altar."

She moved nearer him and grasped him fiercely by the arm, her great dark eyes burning into his.

"Lois is also your daughter," she whispered, "and she loves him, madly, despairingly! Have you no eyes that you have not seen it? It will spoil her life—this marriage—even as it will ruin the happiness of her sister. Brandon, remember the one you are about to sacrifice is your first-born, the child of your first love—your gentle Northern bride!"

Her bosom rose and fell with the agitation within her, and the diamond clasp that fastened the cluster of passion-flowers on the lowcut corsage quivered with rays of light that pierced his eyes. Her arms, white and rounded, were reached out to him in supplication.

He was visibly affected. Deep feeling showed in his face, and the surprise he felt gleamed from his dark eyes.

"Lois in love with Charlston!" he exclaimed. "Are you positive? I thought them only very good friends. But even so, what could I have done, Clarice? It was Ila's hand that Charlston asked for. It is Ila whom he loves."

"Will you permit me to venture an opinion? It is this: Above all others he loves himself. He would do anything for Lloyd Charlston—for his pleasure, his comfort, and more particularly, his pride. Therein lies our chance to save the day."

"I must confess I do not quite follow you, Clarice."

"Then listen! It looks very much as if there would be no wedding tonight, Brandon, unless Lois is the bride. He will consent, I think, for that is the only way by which he can save his pride."

"Good Heavens, Clarice! What an idea! It takes a woman to think of impossible things."

"Yes, and also to make the impossible possible."

"It can't be done! He will never consent!"

"He will be obliged to, or return to his home a jilted man. Jilted at the very altar! Do you think he will like the sound of that? Do you believe he is morally brave enough to face such a position?"

"It must not be! Ila must not be allowed to withdraw at the last moment. It would create a scandal."

"Here is the situation: I have sent Electra for the second time to Ila's chamber, and she has not been able to gain admittance. Lois answered each time that her sister was not yet dressed. The bridesmaids are ready and waiting, but no one can gain access to her apartment. I fear that at last she has found courage to rebel, and that Lois is shielding her as long as possible."

"Then go to her yourself; neither of my daughters will refuse you admittance. But what do you mean by 'making possible the impossible?'"

"Just this: I can wed Lois to Lloyd Charlston, and no one, not even the bridegroom, will know the difference until it is too late. Then for his pride's sake he will not make a scene; for he will know that Ila has thrown him over, and that but for the substitution of her sister the wedding would have been called off."

"My wife, you may be clever, but it is a wild idea. You could not make it work."

"Leave that to me. Only give your consent and I will turn the trick. It was Lois he should have sought in marriage. Tho, manlike, you may never have noticed it, I have known all along that Lois did not give her love unsought. Lloyd Charlston may have been only trifling, but he won her heart before he transferred his attentions to her sister."

"If that is the case, I am not so sure I want the scapegrace in my family. Only necessity restrains me from dismissing the guests at once. But go to Ila. If you fail with her, wed him to Lois, since she is the one who loves him. It is likely to turn out as well in one case as in the other. I give you carte blanche in the matter."

Mr. Hastings turned back as his wife went on down the corridor to her stepdaughter's room. Lois, the only one within that department, heard her footfall outside and glided to the door and unlocked it. She was standing there defiant, and with gloomy face, when Mrs. Hastings softly opened the door and peered in.

"I know whom you seek, mother—the bride! But there will be no wedding tonight, I fear. Ila is not here!"

"Not here?" her mother exclaimed, tho she had felt certain of that very thing. "Where is she? Why did she leave? Tell me quickly, Lois."

"I fear I cannot answer that, mother," replied Lois. "Only that she did not want to be married. She left the room without explaining to me. Her heart is not in this marriage. Why should she be made miserable, while I—oh, mother! my heart is breaking!"

She put out her hands and tottered toward the woman whose child she was, and felt herself clasped to the heart that knew and understood her grief.

"Hush, Lois! and listen to me!" the mother whispered. "It is you who shall become the bride of Lloyd Charlston this night. Your father will arrange the matter with him. Only the guests must now know until it is all over. The chapel shall be dimly lighted, and the veil and orange wreath will hide your dark hair. Then when the ceremony is over you can throw back your veil and surprise them all. No one will ask questions then, and afterward I can give an explanation that will satisfy the curiosity of our friends. Make haste, child. I will help you dress."

The bewildering suddenness of it all left Lois with little to say in remonstrance. She only thought in a vague way how strange it was she did not feel more elated. Perhaps it was because she could only be, at the most, second choice. She was not certain of the reason. She remained passive while her mother with deft fingers substituted the wedding gown for her bridesmaid's attire, and fastened the veil and wreath about her dark head. While the change was being made, unknown to Lois, the note her sister had given her slipped from its place of concealment to the floor. Mrs. Hastings discovered it as they were about to leave the room, and stooping, snatched it from the floor.

"Ah, this is what took Ila away!" she cried, and read the note aloud:

> "Sweetheart: I am waiting with auto at the Crossroads. Come to me. 'All for love and the world well lost!'
> CECIL."

Lois uttered a little cry. Was it thus she had kept her sister's secret? She had vowed it should be forever locked in her bosom, and inadvertently it had already been betrayed to another. The soft voice of her mother recalled her from her trance of surprise and remorse.

"Never mind, dear; two can keep a secret as well as one—sometimes better."

And she tore the note into atoms and flung them into the wastebasket.

CHAPTER III.

AT CHARLSTON HALL.

THE broad acres of the Charlston plantation adjoined those of Mr. Hastings, but the great country mansions were some distance apart. Certain other plantations around them had deteriorated somewhat in looks and value since the war which had resulted in the freedom of the slaves, whose combined labor under the intelligent supervision of the white men owning them had kept the soil in a rich state of cultivation, but the most prosperous families had retained their slaves as hired laborers.

Both Brandon Hastings and Lloyd Charlston had inherited their lands and servants from their slave-owning parents. However, Hastings had not been so successful in his business transactions as his younger neighbor, hence his desire to unite the two families by a marriage between his daughter and the new master of Charlston Hall. Either daughter, it made no difference to him.

Nor would it have mattered much to Charlston himself. He loved all fair women, and those who scorned him he pursued. In choosing a wife he had sought the one most difficult to win. He had had many affairs of the heart without much injury to his own feelings. But now he thought it about time to bring a mistress to the Hall. It was not a question of settling down with him. It was hardly necessary for him to do that, in his opinion. Only advanced old age could take the joy of fast living out of a Charlston's heart. There should still be some merry times for him, he resolved, as well as entertainments in the Hall that would do him honor—after the new wife was installed therein.

A maiden aunt—his father's sister—whose advanced years rendered her less competent as time passed, and also less willing, had hitherto superintended his domestic affairs. Among the servants at her command was a beautiful quadroon girl—a person of so much spirit that she declined to acknowledge the owner of Charlston Hall as master, or even as her superior. She bore the name of Nepha—that was all. At least no one seemed to know her birth name. This girl not only hated Lloyd Charlston, but every one, herself included, in whose veins coursed a drop of white blood. It was almost a mania with her. Lloyd knew this and had vowed to break the spirit of the near-white girl. But he set about it in a different manner from that which might have been expected. He knew that Nepha was free to leave his employ, and that harsh measures would not do. And he meant to overcome her rebelliousness—to win her, by fair means or foul; it mattered little to him which it should be. He had no intention of permitting his marriage to interfere with his pursuit of this girl.

This was his bridal night, and as soon as he was dressed for the wedding he sent for the quadroon. He was looking his best, and he knew it; but he did not feel sure of making an impression on the girl who had so often scorned him. He was seated in the library, a spacious room, well filled with books and comfortable with carved furniture with leather upholstering.

The girl came slowly into the room, her slumberous, brooding eyes cast down. A massive oaken table on which was a shaded lamp, as yet unlighted, was between them. Lloyd sat with one foot lying across his knee, his head reclining against the high back of the carved chair, and a lighted cigar between his teeth. He removed the weed from his mouth and tossed it into the cuspidor beside his chair, and smiled.

"Come, Nepha, let us be friends," he urged. "I am about to bring you a new mistress. You will love her as well as you now love Aunt Anna. She is gentle and sweet, yet dignified enough to reign in a home like this."

He arose and with one swift movement reached her side. He caught her arm and smiled meaningly into the great dark eyes that were startled into meeting his own.

"Come, Nepha, give me a kiss on my bridal night. I love you, you know it! But for the few drops of African blood in your veins you might have been my bride tonight instead of the other. But listen, dear! You shall be my love! What is the marriage tie that it should stand between two fond hearts which Fate has separated? You are not without education and culture—Aunt Anna saw to that—and, therefore, not so much beneath me that we cannot be friends, even lovers."

With a wrench that sent the unscrupulous villain reeling backward, the quadroon tore herself free, and retreating to the door turned and stood at bay.

"You hound!" she cried, her bosom heaving, her eyes flashing. "You hound! After months of subtle pursuit of me you try in one supreme effort what you consider the power of your art upon me. You would count one more victim before you take to your false heart the innocent girl who is foolish enough to wed you.

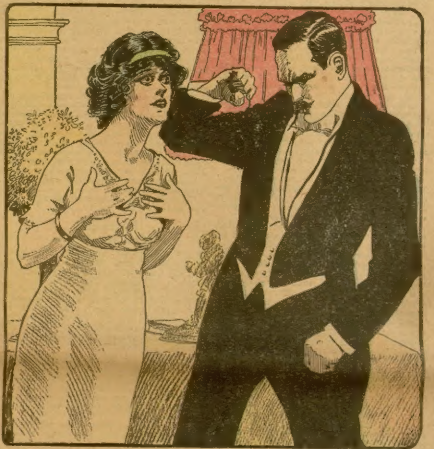
"Back!" she cried fiercely, as he advanced toward her. "If you dare to lay your vile hands upon me again I will not rest until I have killed you—you foul offspring of a debauchee!"

"By Heaven!" he gasped, growing white with rage, "you will pay dearly for that taunt. You have overstepped the limit! That insult——"

He paused for lack of breath to go on. There had been many scenes between them in which she had repulsed, with more or less indignation, his obnoxious advances, but he had hitherto kept his temper, for his conceit caused him to believe her repugnance more or less feigned, and that he was sure to win eventually. But her allusion to his father's unsavory reputation angered him beyond control.

"By Heaven!" he ground out between his teeth, as he darted to her side and caught her again by the arm before she could elude his grasp. "I am master here," he hissed, "and I shall do as I will! You will never leave this room with the virtue you prize so highly in your possession!"

To his surprise she did not struggle to free herself from his grasp. She was quiet with the calm that precedes a sudden rage of the elements. She drew herself up, and only a sneering smile was vouchsafed him. Her eyes were defiant, but mocking. Her manner should have warned him that she felt herself mistress of the situation.



Because his craven soul quaked within him.

"Pshaw!" he thought. Was this all the objection she was going to make to the caresses and burning kisses she must anticipate after his vehement threat? The conquest was too easy—the whole affair too tame to suit his excitable fancy. He relaxed his hold on her arm.

"I thought you would," she said calmly. "I knew you would not dare to harm me."

He accepted her words as a challenge and again advanced toward her, his eyes eager, daring. But his fingers closed upon air when he attempted to grasp her arm, and the girl he coveted was on the opposite side of the table, gazing at him mockingly from a temporary place of safety.

He gazed upon the rounded figure—almost voluptuous-looking in its health and perfection—as inviting in its simple attire as if arrayed in silk or satin, and his thin lips set in a determined manner.

It was growing dusk in the room, and he remembered that his excuse for summoning Nepha was to ask her to light the shaded lamp that stood on the library table. Now he changed his mind. He ceased his pursuit of the defiant girl and went to the door and locked it. Nepha did not move, but watched him with quizzical eyes.

"Remain where you are!" she called to him from across the table as he turned and faced her. She lifted her hand warningly, her eyes were penetrating, dangerous.

He paused, fearful that she had a pistol about her. She smiled, understanding his thoughts.

"I am armed with a mightier weapon than the one you are thinking of, one that will forever stay your pursuit of me. Wait!" She held up her plump white hand, only slightly tinged with yellow. "You will be sorry if you touch me. Even you, as unmanly as you are, would draw back with repulsion if you knew the truth. Ah, I have protection from your desire that you know not of—that you little dream exists."

Her manner more than her words impressed him, and he halted in his tracks on the opposite side of the table. He was wroth with her still and would have wrought her injury thru excess of anger. But her fearlessness, despite her evident repugnance, puzzled him. He waited as she had bidden him.

"Do you know who I am?" Her voice was clear-cut as steel. "Look at me! I am neither black, nor wholly white. Who is it that is responsible for the mixed blood in my veins, do you think? Who owned my ancestors body and soul?"

Lloyd Charlston assumed a bored look. "What is all that to me?" he sneered. "It is entertainment I crave, not a dramatic rehearsal of the wrongs, fancied or real, of the granddaughter of a slave. And I will kiss those unwilling lips, so help me Heaven, before I leave this room—if I have to keep my expectant bride waiting indefinitely."

"You will?" She screamed the words at him and darted from her place of refuge. She stood before him, her hands clinched at her sides, such a fierce gleam in her eyes that he shrank away from her afraid. She was there beside him. Why did he not execute his threat? Ah, why? It was because his craven soul quaked within him.

"Your instinct warns you," she cried, "that the tie of blood is between us! I have kept the secret ever since my dying mother told me the name of the man responsible for my being. Ah, you know now! You start and turn pale. We had the same father, my proud heir to Charlston! Only, the poor girl, born out of wedlock, has no right nor title to the broad acres her humble ancestors have tilled. She is only a menial in the home of her half-brother."

Lloyd had stood spellbound until now, his ardor cooled, a slow horror creeping over him. He related to one with the negro strain! It was false, of course. He would never acknowledge the relationship. Never! He laughed unbelievingly. But his laughter held a false ring. A fear that the thing was true clutched at his heart, and the quadroon knew it.

"A pretty story, my little tragedian, but not a likely one, and certainly not one that is convincing. I simply do not believe one word of it. Moreover, your service in this house ends tonight."

"It ended before your dismissal was ever thought of, my brother," the girl replied mockingly. "I came here to tell you of my intention to leave before you bring your fair but deluded bride to this place. You know why!"

She emphasized the last sentence in a manner that caused him to grind his teeth, tho he did not quite understand until her next words.

"My half-sister, by another father, mind you, and therefore not related to you by blood, is legally the mistress of Charlston Hall, and her son and yours is the rightful heir."

"What are you saying, wench?" he gasped, his face turning an ashen gray. "Your half-sister! Whom do you mean?"

"Lygia, the girl you married, and afterward led to believe the marriage a sham. Ah! You remember her now!"

Like a bombshell the words fell upon the ears of the man whom the quadroon had arraigned until he was nearly at bay. His limbs trembled beneath him as his guilty conscience foresaw exposure, ruin and perhaps the penitentiary ahead. The fact of his relationship to one of mixed blood, sprung so unexpectedly upon him, was disconcerting enough; but that Lygia, the girl he had married and afterward deserted, was of the same mother as Nepha, and therefore a quadroon, was a blow that overcame him completely. For if it were true that Lygia was Nepha's half-sister, the daughter of a mulatto, then his own offspring, Lygia's child and his, and the true heir to Charlston, had a portion of African blood in its veins. This to him, who hated the African race, was the greatest horror imaginable.

"Woman," he cried, as he struggled to gain his self-possession, "who has set you up to this? Was it my accursed enemy, Cecil Lynd? I will tell you a secret now, since it is too late for even him to balk my plans: I am going to marry Ila Hastings tonight principally because I hate the man she loves and who loves her and would wed her if he could. To spite Cecil Lynd I am going to bring the woman he adores to my home. You have failed in your plan to aid him by frightening me with concocted tales, such as you have regaled me with."

"You know that what I have said is true. Truth, like murder, will out. And some day my sister's child, tho he has a small portion of the blood you hate, will reign here, a better master than his profligate father, even tho he is white. It is a prophecy!"

"Let us have done with this!' he cried. "Time passes. I must be ready to start in a hour. I will bid you, pretender that you are, good night and—good-by!"

"Pretender? Ask your Aunt Anna why she had me educated until in learning I am your equal. Ask her if it was not your father's wish. Aunt Anna—ah, yes, she is my aunt as well as yours—is not so bad, tho she is a sister of that reprobate—our father!"

"This is too much! Have done! And do not let me find you here when I return!"

"I am not so sure that I will obey. This house is as much mine as yours—morally. I may take a notion to remain and meet your bride, with whom I am quite well acquainted. Good night."

She made no movement to go, and, exasperated, he unlocked the door and darted thru. That which he had heard this night had completely upset him, and he felt the need of a stimulant, such as he was in the habit of taking. As he passed thru the dining-room he refreshed himself at the buffet, and then locked himself in his study.

"Curse the girl!" he muttered. "It is a lie! She hates me and is trying to annoy me. But how came she to know about Lygia?"

He seated himself at his desk after lighting the lamp thereon, and unlocked the drawer in which he kept numerous documents. It was in a congested state and he could not readily find the paper he sought.

"Jove!" he ejaculated, "I believe that quadroon has been here! That is how she came to know so much about my affairs!"

He started as a light rap sounded upon the door. He opened it to find a young negro servant standing in the corridor, his hat in his hand.

"Well, Sam, you are back, I see. What did you learn? Had Electra any further information to give you? A fine girl, that sweetheart of yours, Sam."

"Yas, suh, she am, marse. An' yas, marse, I done foun' out all about it. Marse Lynd will wait for Miss Hastings at de Crossroads till she comes, an' dey will elope."

"Ha, ha! Nothing like having a sweetheart who will tell you everything, is there, Sam? I suppose she made you swear not to tell? Well, I will not betray you. Here is a gold-piece for you. You may go now, Sam."

"Thank yo', marse!"

The moment the door was closed on the retreating form of the lad, Lloyd Charlston smiled to himself cruelly.

"It is I, not Ila Hastings, who will meet Cecil Lynd at the Crossroads tonight!" he muttered under his breath.

This strange story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

Problem Solved.

"Since I have given my best thought to the problem I have not found it especially difficult to take care of my sister-in-law's 2-year-old baby while she goes shopping," said the bachelor brother-in-law. "For a time, until I mastered the subject, I must confess that it had me considerably obfuscated. But now I merely put the dear little fellow under a tub, weighted down so that by no possibility can he overset it, and then go out to the barn and read and smoke in peace."—Judge.

MASTERFUL MORGAN

:-: Or, :-:

The Hostile Mountain

By William H. Manning

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CHAPTER V.

DORA COMES.

THE instant that Hough had the pouch he pulled sharply at the rein of his horse to swing him to one side, and the animal gladly wheeled from the snow that was buffeting him in the face. Then the thief drove his spurs and sent the roan rapidly away.

The rider expected a shout or a revolver shot to sound behind him, but soon looking back, he saw Morgan plodding quietly along in the old course, his face to the front. Then the snow blanketed the intervening distance and the sheriff was lost to view.

Hough was bewildered by the fact that Morgan seemed not to have noticed his loss, but his mind worked out the problem.

"Too much wind for him to notice the tug at the strap," was his verdict. "Hurrah! I've got the ballots!"

For several minutes he rode hard, going he knew not where, but fast getting clear of the former course. When he felt more at ease he looked for a place to carry out the next step in the game. Too wise to carry the votes longer than was absolutely necessary, he grew delighted as he reached a depression that was half ravine and half pocket, with high, overhanging cliffs that were a shield from the wind and snow.

He rode into the niche and dismounted.

"Business first!" he chuckled. "No need of wood, for a match will eat up all the paper Bludsoe cast."

Using his knife he whipped off the wrapper and had nothing but paper in his hands. He was to be pardoned for growing hilarious.

"The voice of Bludsoe!" he mocked, smiling until the caked snow fell from his reddened face. "Verdict of the freemen! Sacred political rubbish! 'Ballots' and 'burn' both begin with B. Ha, ha! Hough, my lad, you've netted your game. Now for the roast!"

He struck a match. The flame quivered, but defied the remote wind. The fuel was in the thief's other hand, but he did not apply the fire. He stared hard until the match burned his fingers and then dropped it. There was a moment of delay, and then he hurriedly, nervously lighted another spear of wood. Before that, too, burned wholly he knew the truth, and a startled, savage exclamation was flung from his lips. *What he held was only a newspaper folded carefully.*

Bending suddenly he searched the pouch and then had the final item of evidence. Even at the moment he stole the pouch there had not been a ballot in it.

"Tricked!" he snarled bitterly. "Taken in by a bogus parcel. I'm left, and Masterful Morgan is boss of the situation in all ways—— No, by thunder! I'm not done yet! I'll ride to overtake him, and I won't be so thin-skinned next time. Here's after him!"

Swinging into the roan's saddle he began to back-track.

At that moment Morgan was proceeding composedly. He had felt the slight tug as the thief's knife severed the strap, and fully realized what was afoot, but the matter just suited him. He rode placidly for a few minutes and then turned sharply to the left. Being aware that a particularly exposed stretch of ground was in that direction, he knew the rush of the gale would soon cover his trail so no man could track him.

He went half a mile, reached a pocket in the mountains by a devious way, and, screened from the worst of the elemental war, dismounted. He was now at a point where all travelers who knew the mountain well abandoned haphazard riding and used a certain course to avoid tangled conditions near by that were almost unconquerable.

Going to Comet's head he caressed him gently, almost tenderly.

"Forget it, old chap!" he urged. "It had to be done, but your resources shall be exhausted no further. Good boy! I've a jag of oats for you, and there's open grass under your feet. Some feed, eh?"

Comet winked his big eyes clear of snow and, nickering lightly, nibbled at his master with loving lips. Boon companions were Sheriff John and his horse, and the four-legged member of the pair had always been petted and handled with the best possible judgment, while his willing feet had never faltered in service.

Finally the sheriff turned away, and then suddenly chuckled and slapped himself under the arm. His hand encountered a slight protuberance in that quarter. It was the ballots. Before making his last start he had put them in ambush under his coat, swinging the bogus parcel outside, a stratagem that had worked well. He still had his official trust, and Hough had nothing but defeat.

The night was so cold that the sheriff took chances, built a fire under a cliff, ate supper, and then settled down peacefully, soothed by his pipe, but far from careless.

Under his arm was a mischief-breeder, and those who wanted the ballots were not likely to give up trying for them until the door of the capitol building closed behind his back. When would the next attack come?

Having finished smoking he was about to lie down when there was a nearby rattle as of metal on stone. His hand fell to his revolver, he looked and saw a horse come slowly out of the bordering cloud of snow. His first impression that Hough had relocated him disappeared on closer view of the rider, but what he saw was even more startling.

The newcomer was a woman, and he knew her well. Surprised, dismayed, motionless and wordless, he stared until she drew under the cliff. She looked beaten out, but a smile was on her face.

"Run down!" she murmured faintly, yet with much of exultation.

"Dora!" he exclaimed blankly, still stunned with surprise.

"Nobody else!" she returned. "Rather a bad night to be out, John."

"Bad! Why, I wonder you are alive. Where are your companions?"

"You are they, and the only 'they.' You see I'm not dead enough to be incapable of a joke. Bad! Why, this is only a second-degree blizzard. I dare say I can camp with you, sheriff?"

"Bless you, I shall be delighted. Let me help you down. Explanations can be made later. Yes, I'm delighted!"

At that moment John told the truth as near as he saw it. Dora Ingraham was his promised wife, she had appeared at his lonely camp-fire, and she was very welcome. Seeing her he forget that, according to his father, she was hunting him to ask that he destroy the ballots.

She was mountain-bred and hardy, but the cold had played its part, and she moved to the blaze of the fire with some difficulty. Having seen her seated, the sheriff piled on more wood. Previously, to avoid the possibility of calling Hough's attention, he had used little fuel, but he became prodigal now. Hough and prudence were utterly forgotten.

For fifteen minutes he acted the host and the lover. Dora was made comfortable and fed, and, charmed by her company, he did not fail to make the fact known. Host and lover! Playing the double role he even forgot to wonder why she was there, high in the mountains, far from home and from any town.

Dora helped him to forget. She was loving, gay, piquant and charming, and the inevitable was delayed, but his mind finally began working practically again.

"Who are your traveling companions?" he asked abruptly. "Yes, and where are they?"

Wondering that he did not yet guess Dora wasted no time. She was a keen-eyed, energetic, ambitious girl, and the cast of her face was that of one with a will that stopped at no small impediment. She began to show her resolute nature at once, and came swiftly to business.

"I have no companions, for I've been traveling alone. Your father told you, I understand, that I wanted to see you about those ballots."

Morgan stared more blankly than ever. "Why, yes, he told me," was the uncomprehending reply.

"That's why I'm here. I reached the hotel too late to see you, so I rode on, following you. Not overtaking you on the lower ground I kept right on ahead, you see. The bit of a blizzard didn't scare me a bit. Yes, John, I'm here to talk about those votes."

"You took a great risk——"

"Let me admit, in a few words, that I risked freezing to death, for brave talk won't make this storm less than a man-killer. I'm alive, so let's drop that subject. I want to talk about those ballots. You still have them?"

"Yes."

"I want you to cast them into this fire."

"Dora, I can't do that. I am the sworn officer whose duty it is to take them to the capital. I've got to do it. My honor depends upon their getting there safely."

"Your honor demands that you burn them here and now!" she cried quickly. "It can't be that you have looked into the matter carefully. Let me explain."

She explained, and Morgan had to listen to the arguments that had already grown so familiar to him. The virtues of his party were set forth vividly and the sins of the opposition made dark and hateful, but no new facts or reasons were presented. He writhed while he listened, for the delight of the camp-fire had vanished, and he knew worse was to come. Political analysis was sure to be succeeded by the personal element.

"Now," she finally concluded, "you see how it is, and I'm sure you will burn those horrid ballots."

"I can't do that, Dora," he answered. "I am a sworn officer of law, and performing my duty."

"Listen a bit! Half of the State wants the votes destroyed, and all your friends expect you to do it. Your father does, and so do my father and my brother Alexander. Do you remember how those three men worked to make you sheriff? Now they want something in return. Is that more than right? Won't you help your friends, John? Brother has been promised a good office if Grandley wins. Think of that! And I——"

"I am a sworn officer of law!" he interrupted hurriedly.

"Did you swear to help rascality?"

"I swore to see the laws enforced."

"There are divine laws, as well as man-made ones, and I appeal to them. Don't give your help to the wrong. That is my plea! Be your old noble self. For my sake, burn those vile papers. Am I nothing? Or am I your promised wife? John, John, I beg of you to do as I say!"

Leaning forward quickly she placed a hand on his arm.

"Please!" she urged pathetically. "Will you burn the ballots?"

CHAPTER VI.

THE GREAT LOSS.

JOHN MORGAN began to feel like a hunted animal. He had baffled theft and violence and turned a deaf ear to his father's pleadings, but the worst had been deferred until now. This girl, his ladylove, was beating at his armor of endurance with words that made him brain-weary and heartsick. It cut him to the quick to oppose Dora. Better the toothed blizzard than the voice of love attuned to dishonor.

He explained. Using the same arguments with which he had opposed his father, he tried to make Dora see matters as he saw them. Not only common honesty but his official honor was at stake. It was his duty to carry the ballots to the capital and he could not betray the trust.

It was an unfair contest, for Morgan suffered keenly, while she never lost her self-possession. Being determined to win sooner or later, she studied him while she urged, watching for signs of wavering. Detecting none, she changed her tactics and burst into vehement tears.

"Oh! John, John!" she wailed, "how can you be so cruel?"

It was a master card to play, but, tho he did his best to comfort her, he did not hesitate. A few minutes of this and then her tears turned to sharp anger. She flung up her head and he had a flash from two beautiful but, just then, unwomanly eyes.

"Take your choice between the ballots and me!" she cried bitterly.

"What?" he returned blankly.

"Destroy the ballots and keep me, or keep the ballots and lose me. You can't have both. My future, your future, and that of my family are at stake. All of us go to high position if Grandley wins, but we go to nothing if Woodyear becomes Governor. You have used a good deal of time in the past telling me how much you love me. Prove it now! Choose!"

"Dora," the sheriff answered slowly, "I would do anything for you that mortal man can do in decency, but my honor——"

"I've heard that before. Your honor is a poor stick if——"

She caught herself up quickly, seeing a dawning something that bade her stop where she was. She grew pathetic again, but the sheriff, tho gentle, deferential and affectionate, held to his position. Her words cut his brain and flesh, but did not reach the votes of Bludsoe.

The time came when she saw that talk was useless then. She looked up to where the powdery snow fell cloud-like, studied the chances and rose to her feet.

"I'm going to sleep," she said quietly. "Will you help me with my blanket?"

"Gladly!" he exclaimed. "The recess yonder will enable me to make you very comfortable. I'll show you."

Ten minutes later she was in the protected spot, screened by a pile of wood, warmly wrapped, quiet, and, outwardly, in the peace of the hour. John did not lie down immediately, but, sitting by the fire, smoked and meditated. When his journey began he had foreseen certain difficulties, but not what had occurred. The war with Hough, his father's arguments, and Dora's pleas—truly, his road was a hard one. Grieved and indignant, his resolution remained unshaken.

He had a new perplexity to deal with now. Dora was with him, and could not return alone after the storm ended. For a while she must go forward with him, and he must moderate his speed to hers. It would be delay, misfortune and hardship for him. He did not express it that way, but realized it well. Carrying Bludsoe's returns had become a serious matter.

When he finally went to his blanket he found that mental trouble was not going to defy sleep, but when sinking to rest he remembered Hough with some uneasiness. For Dora's sake he had made a fire rashly large, and, tho hopeful that the cliff and the outlying storm would hide its light, he took the precaution to have the parcel of votes directly under his body, where it would not be abstracted secretly.

The storm continued. At the top of the cliff the wind howled dismally and sheets of snow swept along in wild scurry. Portions fell into the rocky pocket, smiting the outer edge of the blaze and causing a regular hissing, but the glow was little lessened.

Dora, under the lee of the beetling rocks, was hardly touched, but the powdery stuff sifted upon Morgan like a growing mantle, promising to make him the base of a drift ultimately. Unconscious of this he slept.

It was two hours later that the whir of the nearer downfall was interrupted at one point. A something more compact than snow and darker than night drew near the fire, and then suddenly halted. Wind-beaten, a man sat on a horse and gazed at the camp.

For some reason he did not rush to the fire as wayfarers are wont to rush, and the situation may have presented a problem. A few minutes settled it and he rode forward until the blaze sent its light to his face. The man was Hough.

Seeking for Morgan with the odds against success one hundred to one, he had finally seen the light of the fire. Luck had been with him, too, since that glow showed so short a distance in the drive of nature. Now he was laden with snow and his face was beaten red, but if he was cold of body his spirit was warm. The fire did not appeal to him, but the big, blanketed figure did. Dora, lying under the cliff, he did not see, but his eyes blazed as he studied the sheriff.

Satisfied, at last, that the latter was asleep, he slid from the roan and, after some effort, incited his benumbed legs to action. Soft-footed he stole forward until he stood over the sleeper.

At that moment, Dora, perversely wakeful, was conscious of a moving something, and she half-raised herself on her elbow. She saw the prowler and recognized him, for he had been no stranger at her father's house. Her eyes brightened—she was positive she knew why he was there. An unexpected ally had come to her aid.

Hough bent forward and looked his hardest. The sheriff had flung the blanket upon his person with irritable carelessness, and it did not wrap him closely. Slowly, carefully, with rare skill Hough moved the fabric and had the coveted view, but when it was had he stood irresolute.

The ballots were invisible, and he was convinced that Morgan was lying directly upon them. What was to be done? The prowler dared not venture open fight with the stout officer. His hand strayed to his knife.

The game was in his hands. One blow with the sharp blade and the returns were his and Grandley was saved. After that—well, many things, among which would be the fact that he was a murderer. Was it to be done?

The conflicting elements within the man battled for supremacy then, and all the while Dora watched, realizing the struggle and weighing the chances that he would strike or not strike. If he decided to wed himself to bloody work she intended to make her presence known by an outcry at the last moment. This would save John—perhaps!

Hough's gaze wandered. A few yards distant Comet and Dora's horse were in a protected niche, happy after their day's toil. Hough meditated afresh and then his face wrinkled into that odd contortion that passes for a smile in the case of one stiffened by benumbing cold. He replaced the blanket and trod toward the animals.

Dora felt like laughing in delight, feeling pleasure that was almost delirious joy. If the intruder shot or stole the horses Masterful Morgan would be long in getting to the State capital. Her own beast she would gladly give up, accepting exile in the bitter mountains.

Her view was now somewhat impeded, but she knew Hough was with the quadrupeds, and she lay down fully and waited. In a short time the man reappeared, leading the pair, and a moment later he was in his saddle with the stolen property in tow. How he accounted for the presence of her horse was not to be known then. He took the back-track, went into the heart of the storm and disappeared.

Dora remained quiescent, smiling joyfully. John had the ballots, but, between the grip of the houseless mountains, the snow and other things, they were not likely to travel very fast toward their destination.

Up near the head of the cliff was a tiny pocket in the rock into which the snow had been sifting from time to time, gathering into a mass. Hough had been gone half an hour when this mass, rendered insecure by its own weight, suddenly took on motion, left the pocket, plunged downward and, in part, alighted upon the sleeping sheriff. Even to a sleeper the shock was noticeable, and he leaped to his feet almost with one motion.

The cause of the trouble was easily perceived, and, recovering his composure, he growled softly and surveyed the camp. Another moment and he was a man of fire. The horses were gone, and hard by were human footprints not yet obliterated by the snow. The way of flight was plain near the cliff, but obscure beyond. He ran to where Dora lay and at once found her looking at him calmly.

"The horses are stolen!" he cried.

"Yes," she returned, disdaining evasion.

"How did you know?"

"I saw it done."

"And remained still?"

"Yes. A loyal Grandley man stole them."

"Do you mean to say you saw them go and said nothing to me?"

"Yes."

He stared, doubting his own senses and her confession. Then, swept by the inexorable facts, he had a moment of weakness, human enough, but unusual with him.

"They are gone—do you realize how this leaves us?"

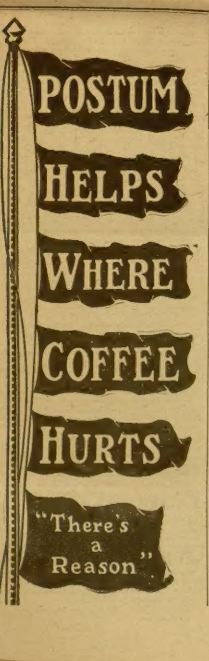
"In the midst of the barren mountains, far from other persons, far from any house, snowed in. We are prisoners here. Providence has interfered to stay the going of the ballots to the capital."

"Providence!" he retorted bitterly. "Say, rather, some tempting devil. Worse yet," he went on harshly, "your hand is red with the murder of my honor!"

CHAPTER VII.

HUNTING THE THIEF.

SOMETHING in the accusation touched the girl's better nature, and her exultation faded away briefly. Morgan shifted his gaze and took in the bleak cliffs and bleaker storm. Somewhere out in that storm the thief was riding away with the stolen horses.



"I wouldn't have believed it of her!" he muttered, like one to himself.

"But, John, we shall not perish," Dora said feebly. "We have food, and after the blizzard dies out we can care for ourselves somehow——"

"Who was the man?" he demanded crisply. "Yes, and how long ago?"

"It was Hough. Maybe it was half an hour ago."

The sheriff tossed additional fuel upon the fire.

"Return to your blanket," he directed. "You will not suffer from cold, and nobody is likely to intrude."

"What are you going to do?"

"Get those horses back!"

"But you can't go on foot——"

"We will see," was his grim interruption. "If I am delayed don't worry for your safety. I'll come some time."

He was moving away, but she sprang forward and cast herself into his arms. She had known of too many deaths in like weather to rely even upon Morgan's endurance, and terror was upon her. The woman in her rose superior to the politician, she sobbed bitterly and, temporarily ruled only by her love for him, she besought him not to risk his life in the cold and driving winds.

It was a heartfelt plea, and, losing a little of his severity, John delayed to speak encouragement, but his resolution was fixed and he went as he had planned. She saw him disappear, and then flung herself down by the fire, crying out with only the storm to hear.

"He has gone to his death, and I sent him!"

Morgan, quickly forgetful of everything except his mission, lost no time after the start was made. The trail, tho not obliterated, was dimming fast, and what was done must be done at once. Altho the downfall was not so thick as formerly, it would soon hide even the broad track of the three horses.

He hastened on thru the ravines of flight, and now and then the shadow of a smile crossed his face as he saw that Hough was not governing his movements with the skill of an old mountaineer. Beset by storm, fleeing in haste, and seemingly not understanding the points of compass by the lay of the land, he lost headway by using cross ravines he should have avoided.

It was no surprise when, at the end of twenty minutes, the dull beat of animal feet was followed by sight of a running horse, and as it came nearer the sheriff was delighted to recognize his own beloved Comet. He called, and the voice had magic effect. The fugitive flung up his head, blinked in the snow and then turned toward his master, nickering softly.

Morgan had time only for a few loving pats when he saw another object approach. Analyzing it, he discovered that Hough was pursuing with the other two horses.

The eyes of the thief did not serve him well, and his first knowledge that anybody else was near came when he was seized and roughly dragged from the saddle. Briefly dazed, he stood still and merely looked. Morgan shook him and sharply spoke one word.

"Well?"

"Devil take the luck!" snapped the thief.

"Did you get lonesome and want to see me again?"

"Destruction overtake these mountains! They make me ashamed of the whole world. Still, I would have been all right if that infernal horse of your hadn't bolted like the stubborn brute he is."

"He likes better company than a thief. See here, you, if you have any business to transact in this world before you leave it, hurry things along. Before law was established in this State there was a way of dealing with horsethieves. I'll put that way in operation again. Do you object?"

"If you were a decent fellow you would give me quarters by your fire for tonight, and then toss me a bone and say, 'Get out!' Even a dog gets that show."

"You are tough on the dog. He deserves all the favors he gets, but you—well, I'm not a man-killer, so you may go free for now——"

Hough had been curbing his temper and showing something like good-humored disgust, but only to put his companion off his guard. Now he suddenly wrenched clear of the hold upon him, slid his hand into his clothes and then brought it out again with a jerk. A flash and a report followed, but the bullet went wild.

The sheriff was upon his like a panther, there was a short struggle, and both went down with Hough underneath. He squirmed, saw the folly of it and lay still.

"You scoundrel!" grated the victor. "You deserve a mate to that lost lead, and I don't know what keeps me from doing my duty, but you shall be saved for the hangman. He has hemp all ready for you, and I won't disappoint him."

The speaker paused, and the wave of mercy swept away. He shook his prisoner violently and his voice took on a new pitch.

"What have you to say against being shot?" he added curtly.

Hough's usual courage had ebbed, and only a wordless gurgle came from his throat when he tried to speak.

"Get up!"

It was a peremptory order, and Hough obeyed slowly. He recognized that he was at a crisis, recognized the fact that his conqueror's odd sequence of words expressed the struggle that was going on in his mind, knew that Morgan was fighting against a desire to pay him in his own coin, and was gravely concerned as to the outcome.

"Hough, this has got to stop," the sheriff continued. "I've given you rope because you are a Grandley man, but you've gone your limit. You may go free, but if you meddle with me again I'll shoot you as I would a wolf. I ask neither word of honor nor oath from you, for I would trust neither of them. I trust in my revolver, for, unlike you, I don't miss. Go where you will, if you keep away from me. You are not a mountaineer, but this storm is not a real blizzard in coldness or venom. You will live thru it. Now, get out!"

Sullen, and yet inwardly thankful, Hough mounted his horse and rode away without speech in return. He went, never looking back, but the heart he carried was not purified by suffering, nor was his hostility vanquished by mercy. He was swearing to strike again.

Morgan watched him out of sight, and then gathered in the other horses and back-tracked. In due time a fair lady who was sitting disconsolate by a fire under a cliff saw a phenomenon that was partly man and partly animal come out of the waning snow, and she grew delighted and leaped up excitedly.

"Oh! John, John!" she cried. "Are you really alive?" and flung herself upon the breast of the sheriff.

He answered kindly, but all the caressing was on her part. He had grown reserved, and lost little time in leading the horses to their old protected niche. By the time he had cared for them Dora had become more calculating than loving.

"Where did you find them?" she asked.

"Back in a nameless ravine," John briefly returned.

"Alone?"

"Hough was there."

"Did you"—she studied his face attentively—"did you kill him?"

"I hope you won't think me weak," was the shamefaced reply, "but I let the poisonous snake live. I'm aware it was a milk-and-water act, but, hang it! I never shot a man except in self-defense, and I couldn't seem to do it now. I hope you won't be ashamed of me."

"Perhaps you did right. Well, now, how long will this storm coop us up in the hills—a week or two?"

Morgan looked at the snowy pall above them.

"You are a mountain girl. Don't you see signs of a change? The wind is shifting fast, and I'm looking for a turn to rain."

Her face fell, for what he considered good news was not so to her. He wanted to get out of the hills, and she wanted to stay in them for two weeks. These diverse views were bred by the ballots at John's side. Like so many evil spirits they separated the pair on every question of the hour.

Dora, too wise to talk ballots then, was willing to sit by the fire and act the devoted betrothed, but the sheriff had other views. Insisting that both go to their rest, he had his way, but the girl lay awake an hour to scheme further against the safety of the votes of Bludsoe.

It wanted two hours of day when John aroused her from a dream-burdened sleep.

"We must move on," he announced. "Snow is no longer falling, and rain is near. That will make rivers in the gulches. Let's get out!"

She yielded to the unwelcome order and, after eating hurriedly, Morgan saddled the horses and the journey was resumed. He took the pathless hills in hand like a master, found a way where only the knack of the pioneer could have done it, and so struggled on until night went. By that time rain had begun, increased, and become a hard drive.

Dora, protected by John's shedwater, remained reasonably dry, but he took in the dampness and grew wringing wet.

Two things occupied his mind besides finding his way—to preserve his trust, and to care for the girl. What mattered it if he was rain-beaten? He was willing to suffer for the one, tho it was coldly inanimate, and he did not know that the other was still plotting against him. Had he known he might well have exclaimed, "Save me from the woman I chose!"

This remarkable story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

The Sick Child.

Little Geoffry Carbuncle had been very low with shooting measles, but now, thank Heavens, he had managed to eat a porterhouse steak in his little bed, and the worst seemed over.

"And funerals so high now, too," shuddered young Mrs. Carbuncle, as she went to answer a ring at the bell.

It was Sammy Tweezers, Geoffry's little friend.

"I tum to find out how Geoffry ith," he lisped shyly.

"Much better, bless your little heart—wait and I'll run and get you a muffin," beamed the delighted Mrs. Carbuncle.

"I'm awful thorry Geoffry ith thick," said Thammy—er, Sammy, as he stuffed the muffin in his trousers pocket.

"Oh, you little dear—wait and I'll fetch you another muffin!" cried Geoffry's mother. And she ran and got it, and Sammy stuffed it into his other trousers pocket and said: "He ain't a-goin' tuh die, ith he, Mrs. Carbuncle?"

"We hope not, Sammy," smiled Mrs. Carbuncle.

"Well if he doth, tan I have his baseball bat?" asked Geoffry's little friend, and got away before Mrs. Carbuncle had time to regain more than one of the muffins.

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CHAPTER XV.

NEIL NELSON had one fault—he could not resist an invitation to drink, and it had resulted in his losing some excellent positions. If it had not been for this failing Tommy would not have had to work as an office boy when he ought to have been in school, and the other child would not have been crippled. However, after the crippled child had been cured thru the kindness of Rose Vandeville, Neil Nelson took a solemn oath to guard against his failing, and had succeeded very well in keeping it, altho the shock of realizing that the woman whom he venerated so highly had been in the building on the evening of the murder unnerved him. Still he kept his promise and succeeded in throwing Prouty entirely off the scent, until the clews were supplied by the hatred of Graves and Mrs. Livingstone.

Nelson was on duty as doorman that same night that Young unconsciously betrayed to Graves what he wanted to find out, and Prouty and Jim found him when they went into the building.

Nelson was instantly on his guard. He had not the slightest intention of telling what he knew, and he only looked a little more stolid than usual as he nodded in answer to Prouty's greeting.

"I want to talk to you," the detective said in a businesslike tone.

"I have my work cut out for me right here," Nelson returned stolidly.

"Jim will take your place. I want you to come with me while I get a snack, and tell me something more about Herrick."

Nelson felt relieved. He had no objection to talking about the murdered man; all he wanted to keep from doing was mentioning anything relative to Rose.

"It won't get me in no trouble?" he asked.

"Sure not," Prouty returned, and so Jim was left in charge of the door, and *the two made their way to a little restaurant in the rear of a saloon, noted for its good German cooking.*

"Won't you join me?" Prouty asked, and Nelson, who had dined on the contents of a dinner pail, was willing, and soon was enjoying a hearty meal.

"Say, this is too dry for mine," Prouty said at last, as he finished his coffee and motioned to the waiter.

"Two steins," he ordered.

Nelson shook his head vigorously.

"Nix for mine; I'm on the water wagon," he said.

"All right," Prouty remarked carelessly, "make it one," and when the stein was brought him he drank the beer lustily, smacking his lips and saying cheerfully: "You don't know what you're missing, Nelson; the beer's fine."

Nelson meant to stick to his resolution, but a thirst of some weeks was upon him. He eyed the stein thirstily for a moment, then asked hesitatingly:

"Think one will do me any harm?"

"Sure not," Prouty said cordially, ordering one for him. Outside of his professional exactions, Prouty would have been the last man to tempt a fellow creature he knew was weak, but when on the scent of information the detective was remorseless. He loved Richard Kurston as a brother, and yet, convinced as he now was of Mrs. Kurston's guilt, he did not hesitate, but was bending every energy toward securing sufficient evidence for a warrant.

Nelson, like many before him, drank and fell, for the one stein was followed by several others, and then by whisky, and within less than half an hour Prouty had him where his tongue was wagging on aimlessly, and the detective then began to put his questions.

"So you are a family man, Nelson, old man?"

"Sure I am."

"And you have a son, maybe?"

"Two. One was a cripple oncet."

"And not now? That's the fine thing. Drink to his keeping well."

Nelson tossed off his whisky, and Prouty motioned to the waiter to fill his glass. The doorman was too far under the influence of liquor to notice that the detective was not drinking, only buying.

"Sure and I love her for it," Nelson stammered.

"Her? Who?"

"Miss Vandeville."

"What's she got to do with your boy, a proud, rich young lady?" Prouty almost held his breath.

"To do with him?" Nelson asked, lurching his body across the table in Prouty's direction. "She has everything to do. She had him cured. The poor little fellow! Couldn't walk a step till she had him cured," and Nelson began to cry.

Once more obeying Prouty's gesture, the waiter filled Nelson's glass.

"You must be *awfully grateful to her*," *Prouty suggested.*

"*Grateful? Say, man*," here Nelson's speech became very much obscured by his emotions, and Prouty began to ask himself if he could have given him too much for his purpose.

"Well, go ahead and say it," Prouty urged a little impatiently.

"I'm her friend always."

"Sure you are."

"Yes, sir, I'm her friend. Old Man Nelson can do something for her now," and he laughed in what he thought was a sly manner.

"Nonsense. What can a poor man like you do for a rich young lady like her?" and Prouty laughed scornfully.

"More than you think," Nelson returned, endeavoring to draw himself up and look important, but failing miserably, and sinking back in his chair.

It seemed as if he were going to sleep right then, but Prouty tried the desperate chance of plying him with one more drink, and it had the effect of spurring him into a last rally.

"Yes, Nelson's the man," he cried, winking and looking about him to see if they were observed.

"But you can't do one thing she would appreciate," Prouty goaded him.

The sneer acted like a lash upon the befuddled brain of the man, and he said with a sob of alcoholic grief that threatened to overcome him:

"I can keep her from being hung."

Prouty caught his breath. Grabbing the man by the shoulder he shook him vigorously, saying:

"You ought to be jailed for hinting such a thing!"

"It's the truth, so help me!" Nelson sobbed, blinking up at the detective.

"Tell me just what you know," Prouty commanded.

They were alone in the restaurant, save for the waiter, and having been well tipped and shown Prouty's star, he would have allowed almost anything before remonstrating.

Nelson looked up into the flaming eyes of his companion, and then, with a gasp, he stammered:

"She came into the building the night Herrick was killed. I saw her, and I ain't never going to tell," and then he toppled over on the table, dead to the world until he slept off what he had drunk.

Prouty was triumphant, for he had accomplished what he had come after, and he called up the waiter and gave him another generous tip. He told him to see that Nelson reached home safely, and then, ignoring the fact that he had made a man fall by the way when he was trying to reform, as well as to betray his benefactress, Prouty hastened away, muttering to himself:

"Well, my lady, your money won't shield you, nor my friendship for your husband. If some one else had been put on the case he might have been bought off, but Bob Prouty sticks until the end. That's me," he added in the first person, as he dodged carriages and automobiles.

"I'll see Graves in the morning to gather up any loose ends, and then I'll be ready. The only thing we haven't discovered is a motive. I don't hold to Graves' idea that Kurston blackmailed her into marrying him. I know that lad too well. Evidently they were engaged, and there was something Herrick knew and was threatening her with. Probably letters. Yes, that's it. He had letters from her, and she went after them. He wouldn't give them up, taunted her with them, and in a rage she killed him. Of course, the defense will put forth that she wasn't strong enough to kill a big man like him, but if the blow was struck when he was off guard, with as sharp a knife as that, a child could have done the murder. Any doctor will testify to that."

The man was grinning to himself. All friendship was forgotten, he was now the bloodhound of the law, tracking down the one he believed guilty of a crime.

CHAPTER XVII.

FRANK YOUNG whistled gayly as he bounded up the steps leading to Grace Appleton's home. No longer was he a society exquisite. For the first time in his life he was calling upon a lady in a business suit. His dress clothes had been sold with what he decided were unnecessary possessions, and he was elated to think he would be none the less welcome here because he had done so.

Grace herself opened the door, and he looked at her in open-eyed admiration. Instead of the fashionably made gown she would formerly have worn, she was dressed in a white shirtwaist and black skirt and looked beautiful to him. He had never considered her lovely before, merely pretty, but now he told himself:

"Even Rose can't beat the little girl at the beauty stunt."

If Frank Young had appreciated the fact that before making his call he had told Graves all that person wanted to know, he would not have felt so lighthearted, but fortunately for his peace of mind he was not aware of it, and so enjoyed his chatter with Grace for half an hour before he touched upon what he considered were more important matters.

"You look stunning, Gracie," he began.

"Think so? This is my business suit," she said proudly. "Rose does not believe we ought to dress up fine when at the Barracks. She thinks it hurts the poor things' feelings and makes them envious."

"Rose knows what's right," Frank said cordially. There was a moment's pause, then he resumed: "Well, Gracie, I have made the high dive. You see before you Franklin Young, attorney-at-law, a hard-working, grubbing lawyer, minus clients, plus a lot of wasted years, but one who is going to make a pretty strong attempt at making good, instead of being a poor imitation of the real thing."

Grace looked at him, and as he concluded an expression came into her eyes that made him catch his breath, then spring to her side. Half kneeling beside her, he threw his arms about her, whispering:

"Is it true, Grace, darling? Honest is it?" and she evidently understood him, for after a sweet, shy glance into his eyes, she whispered back:

"I guess it is, Frank," and then their lips met in a long, tender kiss.

All the world was forgotten as they

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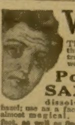

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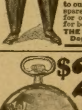

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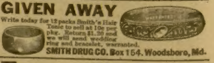

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were clasped in each other's arms. Neither in their worldly lives had ever dreamed of a love like this, but Frank was the first to recover. With a deep sigh he released her and rose to his feet.

"I'm a brute, Grace, but I couldn't help it, dear."

"Why a brute?" she asked gently, her face rosy from his kisses.

"I have no right to make love to you," he said sadly. "It will be a long, long time before I can take care of you, thanks to my years of idleness," and he scowled fiercely.

"I love you," the girl breathed, clinging to his hand. "I'm willing to wait."

"But, Grace, it isn't fair," he said, looking down at the sweet little face.

"I'm willing," she whispered, and again he kissed her and again, until she fled across the room, laughing and begging for time to recover her breath.

Frank followed her, and as he looked down at her, he asked with a tenderness in his voice she had never thought him capable of expressing:

"Do you remember, darling, the time we saw Rose look at her husband?"

"Yes," came in the faintest whisper from Grace's lips.

"Remember what I said about what I would do if any one looked that way at me?"

"Yes, dear."

"Grace, you looked at me just that way, and so I couldn't help taking you in my arms."

He did it again, and kissed her more than once, but as soon as Grace recovered her breath she asked:

"And do you remember what I said about what I'd do if a man returned my look?"

"Of course, darling."

"You looked at me just the way Mr. Kurston looked at Rose," she declared.

The two stood gazing at each other delightedly.

"Isn't it wonderful that love isn't confined to just one couple?" she asked softly.

"They can't love each other as much as we, even tho both Rose and Kurston are fine people," Frank decided.

"They just couldn't, but perhaps they think they do," Grace declared.

"I expect they do," Frank admitted, and then asked: "When did you begin to love me?"

"When did you?" she parried.

"I guess I have always loved you, but I didn't have any notion of it until you showed me something of the real girl beneath the society crust, that very night we discovered why Rose had married," he returned gently, and Grace clinging to him confessed that her love had begun that same night.

"Still, dear heart," Frank said soberly, "I know that I ought not to have spoken to you yet. The road before us is a long one, and we must walk it apart. I'm going to work hard and make it as short as possible, but when I think of the time I have wasted, I'm crazy."

"Are you a good lawyer?"

"Yes, I think I am; that is, along certain lines. The little I have done has been in corporation work, and I like that. If I could get hold of some, I'd make a success. There is nothing I like better than to study up on knotty questions, but I'll have to take what I can get, if it's day labor on the streets, so as to make a home for you."

"You dear!" she whispered, then added: "But perhaps the road won't be such a long one, or at least we may be able to walk it together."

"No, Grace, we'll not marry until I can take care of you."

"Would you be willing to leave New York?"

"I'd go to darkest Africa if there was work."

"It's not as far as that," Grace said, blushing deeply. "You see Rose was smarter than either of us. She guessed how we felt and satisfied my heart about you. Then she said she was so pleased at the way we both were doing, and made us an offer."

"An offer?"

"Yes, you don't mind my talking over our love with her, do you? She was so dear and sweet, and I knew we loved each other," and Grace looked up at him with such love and trust in her eyes that he could only kiss her and bid her go on.

"She and her father are interested in a railroad way out West in a little rough mining town. There will have to be a resident lawyer, one who understands and likes corporation law. She told me that her father had looked up what you had done in that direction, and that if you wanted to accept, and would go as a married man, the position was yours. The salary is a good one, but there will be awfully hard work. We would be isolated from all of our friends, and be a good deal alone with each other."

"You talk as tho that would be a drawback—being alone with each other," Young cried joyfully.

"Do you want to accept?" Grace continued, looking shyly at him.

"Accept? Does a man refuse what seems like a gift from Heaven? Accept? Indeed I will, and will bless her name all my life. And I'll make good, dear, I'll make good, I swear I will!"

"I know you will," she said contentedly.

There was silence for a few moments, the thoughts of both going out to the lovely, considerate woman, who, in the midst of her own busy, happy life, found time to make things easy for them. Suddenly Young raised his head, which had been pressed against her hair, and asked:

"When can we be married, darling?"

Grace's face flamed scarlet, but she said softly: "Rose said they wanted you to take charge by March 1st."

"And this is the 24th of January. Think we could be married in two weeks, dearest?"

Grace did not hesitate, but said gently: "I think so, dear," and then they kissed each other once more.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THINGS were all mixed up in the office of the Wyencott Manufacturing Company. The pretty stenographer and the cashier were to be married and start in business for themselves. The bookkeeper had accepted a position with a rival establishment, and Tommy was given notice to leave because he had come in so late as to bring down the wrath of the Old Man on his head. Only the shipping clerk would remain. All the others were leaving, and he alone of the original force was to stay and help the Old Man break in the new one.

If any one had taken the trouble to look twice at Tommy he would have seen that his face was red and his weak eyes looked as tho he had been crying, as he had. His father's fall from grace the night before had occasioned much sorrow in their household. Tommy's reason for being late was that he had gone around to the apartment house of which his father was night doorman, to try and fix things up because of the latter's failure to stay on duty the night before. His efforts had been in vain, and now that he had lost his own place, things looked bad for the Nelsons.

Mechanically he went over to his seat, next the wall, and fitting himself down in his chair, removed the calendar and glued his ear to the opening. Suddenly he stopped working, all his attention being focused on what was going on in Graves' private office.

"Then you have all in train?" Tommy had heard a woman ask.

"Everything. Prouty is pretty good, but I'm not so bad a mutt myself."

"Still none of us has been able to supply a motive," Mrs. Livingstone said coldly, for it was she whom Tommy heard talking.

"It's easy enough to find a motive. Without doubt Herrick had some letters of hers."

"What kind of letters?"

"The kind women are forever writing to men like Herrick," Graves returned.

"Not women like Rose Vandeville."

It was here that Tommy stopped working.

"Perhaps not women, but Rose wasn't always a woman. She might have seriously compromised herself when still a young girl."

"Still this is only supposition," and Lola Livingstone's voice broke with disappointment, not with regret over the part she had played, but because no real motive had been unearthed against the woman she hated so cordially.

"Even if the evidence isn't strong enough to convict, I think it is enough to secure her indictment. This will keep her in jail for some months, and that is something," Graves said with a snarl.

"It'll lower her head a little, I'm thinking," Mrs. Livingstone jeered.

"And that of her husband," Graves added.

There was a sound as tho a chair was pushed violently aside, and then Tommy heard the woman say in a voice choked with fury:

"You stop that talk right now. Because you happen to have stumbled on a secret of mine, you do not need to flaunt it before me every chance you get."

"All right, Lola, all right! Excuse me," he said, with a laugh that was not pleasant to hear.

"Go over the evidence slowly," Mrs. Livingstone commanded, and he complied.

Mouthing the words as tho he enjoyed their taste, Graves related every step, finally telling Young's confirmation of Herrick's appointment with Rose, and then added:

"The best information, tho, was given by Old Man Nelson."

Tommy caught his breath so sharply that he was afraid that the two plotting so vilely on the other side of the wall would hear him, but they were so absorbed that it would have taken more than the righteous indignation of the office boy to have disturbed them.

"Prouty is a jewel," Mrs. Livingstone said coldly. "Getting that information out of Nelson was good work."

"Yes, that supplies the connecting link," Graves assented.

Poor Tommy clasped his hands and wrung them disconsolately. His father of all men in the world to betray their dear lady!

"Prouty will make the arrest this afternoon," Graves continued.

"How appropriate!" Mrs. Livingstone purred. "On the exact day their honeymoon terminates."

"Eh?" Graves ejaculated.

"It is just four weeks today since they were married," Mrs. Livingstone said, with a cruel smile curling her lips.

"So it is," Graves assented, then added, "Are you satisfied?"

"No, not exactly. The connection is scarcely close enough, but I think it will do to give her plenty of trouble. Of course we don't want her electrocuted."

"Don't you believe her guilty?" Graves asked quickly.

"Do you honestly think she killed the man?" the woman asked in return.

Graves shook his head. "I don't honestly know," he confessed.

"I would be willing to wager a pretty

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substantial sum that she did not," Mrs. Livingstone said coldly, "but that is something she will have to prove."

"I say, Lola, do you think I have done my part well?" Graves asked.

"I suppose so, but I must leave now. I'm sailing for Europe this afternoon."

"Why?"

Mrs. Livingstone shrugged her shapely shoulders as she replied:

"I think it is perhaps best. You and I have been planning and executing something that might be called conspiracy, and I would rather be out of the country. Then, too, I don't mind telling you that I am afraid my friends do not appreciate me as much as they ought."

"Europeans are not so particular, eh?" Graves gibed. Then, as she only smiled disdainfully, he added: "I want some more money. As you say we have been conspiring against our dear friends, and as I am not going to go to Europe, but will remain here, the brunt of anything unpleasant that might happen will fall upon my shoulders."

The woman laughed her mean, sneering laugh, and said with such contempt in her voice that even Tommy recognized it and was glad he was not in the same room with her:

"Bradley Graves, if Stanley Herrick was one-half as contemptible as you, I can readily understand any one murdering him." Then she sat down and wrote a check, saying as she handed it to him: "That's the last money you will ever receive from me. I would advise you to take it and whatever you may have left of the other one and get out of this town," and subsequent events proved that he followed her advice.

Little Tommy's head spun round, but one idea remained fastened there. Returning the calendar to its place, he grabbed up his cap and slunk out of the office. He had no money and had to walk to the Vandeville home. His feet were sore and his stomach empty by the time he reached there. As he crawled up to the entrance the automobile in which Rose took a daily ride drew up to the door, and he saw the object of his veneration emerge, looking so beautiful and sweet that something seemed to give way in his little breast, and he fell almost fainting at her feet.

"Why, bless the child!" Rose exclaimed, and when she had drawn him to his feet, she recognized him.

"Tommy!" she exclaimed.

"Let me talk wid youse, please, Miss Vandeville," Tommy pleaded, and Rose smiled back at him like an angel, the tired child thought.

"Carry him in, please," she said to the chauffeur, who would have gone thru anything for her, and he took the small frame in his strong arms and bore the lad into a warm, beautifully furnished room, unlike any Tommy had ever seen before.

"Now, Tommy, I know you are hungry," Rose said, smiling at him, "and I *will have to change my dress, so you eat something and I will be back to listen to you in a few moments.*"

The lad was half-starved, but so anxious was he that he could not enjoy the bountiful lunch Rose had sent to him, and jumped to his feet when she came back.

"What is it, Tommy?" she asked, sitting down by him, and taking his grimy hand in hers.

Then he burst out with such a confused story that it took her some time to untangle it. He saw that she grew very pale, but she did not scold him, and only smiled at him in a way that made the tears start to his eyes, so sad was it.

"An' to tink," he sobbed, "dat me fader should play de gumshoe act."

"Never mind, Tommy," she said gently. "He was tempted, I know, and is punished by losing his place. And you have lost your place, too?"

Tommy nodded.

Rose went to a desk in the corner, wrote something on a card, and bringing it back, said in her sweet, low voice:

"You take this to the address I have written, give it to the manager, and you will have a better place. I will see about your father in a day or two and get him something to do."

"Dėn youse ain't sore wid him?"

Rose shook her head. "No, dear, and now I want you to take a little present from me," and she slipped a five-dollar bill into his hands.

"No, no, Miss Rose!" Tommy protested, but Rose insisted.

"And Tommy," she added, "I want you to do your best in your new position, for that gentleman is a friend of mine and will give you the place to please me."

"I'll make good," Tommy promised, and then his eyes sought the food he had neglected in his grief.

"Better sit down and eat some more," Rose suggested. "Make yourself at home and stay as long as you like. You will excuse me, I know," and then with a gentle pat on the tousled head, Rose left him. She was still very pale, but otherwise not apparently disturbed.

Next week's Ledger will contain the concluding chapters of this interesting story. You will miss a great treat if you do not read it to the end. We will give you constantly the very best stories of entertainment that money will buy, so send in your subscription and take the Ledger regularly, if you are not doing so. You will not regret it.

* * *

FRAZZLED NERVES.

"No," said the girl in the hat with the white roses, "I haven't seen Charlie for a number of days. I guess he isn't feeling very well or else is recovering."

"Recovering!" echoed the young woman in the orange tango waist. "I didn't know he was ill!"

"It is not exactly illness," explained the young woman with the white roses in her hat. "It is mostly shock. And I don't blame him. It was an awful evening!"

"Tell me!" begged her friend.

"We went to the movies," proceeded the heroine of the tale. "I suppose it was just a curious coincidence, but every last film had a snake in it!"

"My goodness!" shuddered the girl in the orange waist.

"That's what I said!" agreed the other.

"First," she continued, "they tied a girl to a ladder in an abandoned house and the villain, who appeared to be a snake collector, took them out of a bag by the handful and shook them at her and then draped them nicely around the ladder above her. It was a comic film, so called, and ended by a dozen policemen and all the rescuers being tangled up with all the snakes.

"Then the conspirators in the next film tried to scare the girl into revealing the hidden money by shaking a bowie knife and a large snake in her face. By that time Charlie and I were shuddering in unison. He said he hated 'em worse than I did and wasn't ashamed of it.

"There was a circus snake charmer in the next film and after that we fled. I tell you I stepped high going down the aisle, and I noticed that Charlie had a tendency to hop along himself. I know I could have made the door in two jumps if conventionality had not restrained me. The brightly lighted street looked very, very good to me!

"Then we clambered up the steps of our porch. I have been very proud of our porch this summer. It is shaded with vines and has heaps of palms and ferns and things sitting around in the corners and is furnished with a hammock and wicker. The street light filtered thru the vines like a well-conducted moon as we strolled in, and then for one awful minute Charlie and I had convulsions.

"Simultaneously we leaped into the air and screamed—and when I came down I fell over a chair to the floor while Charlie ripped the hammock down as he tumbled.

"'Across my feet!' I hissed. 'I felt it bite—on both insteps! Do you suppose it is a p-p-poisonous one?'

"'It b-b-bit me, too!' Charlie stuttered.

"As we sat clutching our lacerated ankles and shuddering I chanced to glance down the street. Tearing along as tho it was attached to a motor gone crazy was a little black kitten! It was traveling about one hundred miles an hour in its terror, and then I remembered that I had heard a sort of scrambling noise just before the attack. The kitten had been asleep in a chair and dreamed that we were Newfoundland dogs, I suppose. Weakly Charlie and I staggered to our feet and into chairs. We didn't say anything for some time. Then he said grouchily: 'Well, anyhow, it might have been a snake—and it might have bitten us!'

"'I think I'll faint,' I told him, shakily, and he had to rush into the house for ice water and a fan.

"While he was frantically chopping ice in the refrigerator he shook loose some damp lettuce leaves from the pile on the top of the ice box that the cook had forgotten to put inside, and they landed on the back of his neck as he bent over. I wish you could have heard the political convention that followed! Charlie roared and yelled and pounded. Father and mother tumbled downstairs, and father added his roars of inquiry to the meeting, while mother shrieked that somebody was killed and she knew it and for mercy sakes not to tip all the currant jelly just made that day!

"They dragged Charlie out pawing the air and gurgling, and then saw me perched on top the back of the sofa murmuring: 'The snake! The snake! Did it bite him?'

"Well, finally we sent Charlie home when he partially recovered. I wouldn't go any farther than the doorstep, I was so nervous by this time, and I saw him start bravely off. Halfway down the steps a waving strand from the woodbine clutched him around the throat and—oh, well, what's the use? Only the whole neighborhood is busy making up stories about the mysterious tragedy that occurred at our house. I believe they have it now that father chased mother away from her happy home with a gun, and that you could hear her wails a mile off.

"Anyhow, father had to carry me upstairs. I was beyond touching the floor by that time. No, I haven't seen Charlie since!"

"Well, I don't wonder!" said the girl in the orange waist.

* * *

The Bait.

Altho the notice plainly stated that fishing was prohibited there, the angler sat placidly dangling his line over the stream.

The irate keeper, who approached him, was surprised to see that the line was baited with a potato. In an amused voice he asked the intruder what he was doing.

"Fishing," was the reply. "You see, my health has been upset by financial worries, and I came down here to see if fresh air would help me."

Thinking that perhaps the poor chap was mentally afflicted, the keeper went away without denouncing him.

That evening the keeper was in the local tavern, telling his friends about the potato-baited line, when in walked the angler.

"Any luck?" said the innkeeper, kindly.

"Oh, fair!" was the reply, as the fisherman opened his basket and displayed a fine catch.

"Look here," stormed the infuriated keeper, "you didn't catch that lot with a potato."

"Oh, no!" said the angler, coolly. "That was what I caught you with."

* * *

A man isn't necessarily two-faced because he has a double chin.

Like A Boy at 50 Bubbling Over With Vitality---Taking Iron Did It

Doctor says Nuxated Iron is greatest of all strength builders---Often increases the strength and endurance of delicate, nervous folks 200 per cent. in two weeks time.

NEW YORK, N. Y.—Not long ago a man came to me who was nearly half a century old and asked me to give him a preliminary examination for life insurance. I was astonished to find him with the blood pressure of a boy of 20 and as full of vigor, vim and vitality as a young man; in fact a young man he really was notwithstanding his age. The secret he said was taking iron—nuxated iron had filled him with renewed life. At 30 he was in bad health; at 46 careworn and nearly all in. Now at 50 a miracle of vitality and his face beaming with the buoyancy of youth. As I have said a hundred times over, iron is the greatest of all strength builders. If people would only throw away patent medicines and nauseous concoctions and take simple nuxated iron, I am convinced that the lives of thousands of persons might be saved, who now die every year from pneumonia, grippe, consumption, kidney, liver and heart trouble, etc. The real and true cause which started their diseases was nothing more nor less than a weakened condition brought on by lack of iron in the blood. Iron is absolutely necessary to enable your blood to change food into living tissue. Without it, no matter how much or what you eat, your food merely passes through you without doing you any good. You don't get the strength out of it, and as a consequence you become weak, pale and sickly looking just like a plant trying to grow in a soil deficient in iron. If you are not strong or well you owe it to yourself to make the following test: See how long you can work or how far you can walk without becoming tired. Next take two five-grain tablets of ordinary nuxated iron three times per day after meals for two weeks. Then test your strength again and see for yourself how much you have gained. I have seen dozens of nervous, run-down people who were ailing all the while, double their strength and endurance and entirely get rid of all symptoms of dyspepsia, liver and other troubles in from ten to fourteen days' time simply by taking iron in the proper form. And this after they had in some cases been doctoring for months without obtaining any benefit. But don't take the old forms of reduced iron, iron acetate or tincture of iron simply to save a few cents. You must take iron in a form that can be easily absorbed and assimilated like nuxated iron if you want it to do you any good, otherwise it may prove worse than useless. Many an athlete or prizefighter has won the day simply because he knew the secret of great strength and endurance and filled his blood with iron before he went into the affray, while many another has gone down to inglorious defeat simply for the lack of iron.—**E. Sauer, M. D.**

NOTE.—Nuxated Iron, recommended above by Dr. Sauer is not a patent medicine nor secret remedy, but one which is well known to druggists and whose iron constituents are widely prescribed by eminent physicians everywhere. Unlike the older inorganic iron products, it is easily assimilated, does not injure the teeth, make them black, nor upset the stomach; on the contrary, it is a most potent remedy, in nearly all forms of indigestion, as well as for nervous, run-down conditions. The manufacturers have such great confidence in Nuxated Iron that they offer to forfeit $100.00 to any charitable institution if they cannot take any man or woman under 60 who lacks iron and increase their strength 200 per cent. or over in four weeks' time, provided they have no serious organic trouble. They also offer to refund your money if it does not at least double your strength and endurance in ten days' time. It is dispensed by all druggists.

My Pet Corn Ended This Way

Written by a Blue-jay User

I had a corn which bothered me for years. It spoiled a hundred evenings.

Nothing in my life had yielded such a sum of pain.

I did what all do—pared it, daubed it. But I caused more soreness than I saved in pain.

And the corn remained.

Then I read of Blue-jay.

One night I applied it, and the pain forever stopped. In two days I removed it, and the corn was gone.

Never since, believe me, have I let a corn ache twice.

No friend of mine now ever has a corn. I told them all of Blue-jay. It has never failed—I know it cannot fail.

Now I write this to say to every woman that corns are out-of-date. The pain ends instantly with Blue-jay. And the corn soon disappears.

Once prove this and you will keep as free from corns as I do. And it is well worth while. Try this way tonight.

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The Fairy Corner

Puff.

One summer while the Browns were living in South Dakota a cowboy with a great drove of bronchos stopped in town and sold a number of them there. Mr. Brown, who was fond of horses and also liked to try new things, bought a 1-year-old colt. He wanted to see what it was that made the broncho the unreliable horse that it is.

He put the colt, which he called Puff, into the back yard and petted her as he had always petted his civilized colts. This little wild animal seemed to enjoy caresses as much as they.

She had soft, thin hair and the flies annoyed her so much that Mr. Brown cut the legs from two pairs of trousers and put them on her. He tied a loose cotton blanket over her, and all the next two summers she wore this queer dress. Odd enough she looked wandering thru the yard with the trousers flopping about her legs and the blankets blowing in the wind.

Between her second and third year Mr. Brown broke her to drive. From the first she trotted off with the buggy like any old farm horse. The Browns flattered themselves that they knew how to bring up a broncho. One morning the head of the house thought he would blanket her. Puff was hitched to the buggy ready to start to town. As he approached with the blanket, Puff started as if she had never seen a blanket before. When it touched her she reared and pitched and plunged, while straps and buckles flew in every direction. She seemed wild with fear of what had been her everyday dress for two years. After that no one felt quite sure of her.

One day she was trotting quietly along with the buggy, when in some way the halter strap came untied and dropped down. Without a second's warning Puff was running and plunging, and before she could be quieted the buggy was strewn along the road for miles. After that the Browns were afraid to drive her and decided that she must be sold.

A few days before the sale she was hitched up with another horse to carry some guests to the station. Going down a long hill a bolt broke and the singletree fell down on her heels. The woman guests screamed and Mr. Brown turned white to the lips, but Puff merely looked around to see what had happened, and then stopped of her own accord.

❦

A CLEVER IDEA.

Old Mr. Bug was wet clear thru,
And what was Mr. Bug to do?
The rheumatism he would get
If he remained all soaking wet.

He'd traveled in the pouring rain,
Already he could feel a pain.
Unless he found a place to dry
He'd surely catch a cold and die.

A 'bacco pipe he found all lit,
And drew a chair up close to it,
And there he dried his soaking feet—
A bug like that is hard to beat.

❦

The Bluebirds.

Many years ago there lived in a small town in northern Illinois a little girl whose great joy was to watch the beautiful bluebirds in her father's great yard, and to find their nests and see the parents feed and care for the young birds until they, too, could fly. In the yard next to the little girl's was a big, old-fashioned Colonial house with large, square pillars or columns across the front. In this yard there were several bluebirds' nests—one in the corner of the orchard fence and two in an old hollow tree. The little girl used to spend hours watching the birds and hunting for new nests every year, but best of all she loved the old nesting places where the same bluebirds came back to her every year. She would not have a cat for a pet, because the cats frightened away her dear birds, and every day in spring she made the rounds of the nests, sprinkling crumbs near them and keeping fresh water near the well.

She had learned a great deal about them, and only one thing puzzled her very much; this was, why did she never see any of the bluebirds come out of the hole at the top of the big porch pillar? She saw them go in every year, sometimes two at a time, but so far never had she seen one fly out. She thought it must be because she did not watch the nest hole so closely—she was a little shy and kept away from the big house.

One day she saw the minister and his family, who lived there, drive away in their big carriage. Just as they left the yard a brilliant bluebird flew into the hole at the top of the porch pillar, closely followed by another. "Now," said Marie, "I'll see them come out!" She looked until, becoming tired, she seated herself on the grass to watch, but altho she was very patient and waited a long time, no birds flew out. Marie was very curious to know about this, so ran over to the porch and stood near the foot of the pillar.

Then she understood, for strange fluttering and wild beating of wings inside could plainly be heard, then quiet for a short time, and again the beating of wings up a little way against the sides told her of the fate of the poor birds. They could not get out! They were in a living prison!

"Oh-h!" moaned Marie, and ran home to get her father, who came at once, and, listening, knew the truth. "Oh, papa! Can't you get them out?" cried the little girl tears falling down her cheeks.

But her father explained gently that to do that the pillar must be cut open—that when the minister came home they would see if he were willing. Poor Marie cried until her father was really frightened, and just as he was starting to find the minister the big carriage drove in at the gate, and he and Marie, her eyes red and swollen, went over to see what might be done.

Well! What do you think? The good minister, getting a saw, said, "We will see what there is here," and he sawed and cut out a piece of board near the bottom. No sooner had he made an entrance than out flew two bluebirds and in a minute another. Putting in his hand he drew out still another live bird and then a dead one, and another and another, until fifteen birds had been accounted for. Then tiny bird skeletons were brought out, some few almost whole, others in fragments—a leg bone, a skull, a pair of wings—all that remained of long dead and gone bird folk. Poor little things! Having flown in and reached the bottom, in that narrow space they could not fly to the top, and each year had added to the number of small victims.

When the minister and Marie's father had counted as best they could the number reached was twenty-seven, with others probably uncounted. It was a tragic day for Marie, but she was made happy by the thought of the four rescued birds and by seeing the hole in the pillar fast closed so that no more of her little friends could be led astray.

❦

THE BABYTOWN EXPRESS.

There are trains that roar and rumble
at the call of human stress,
But the fastest and the gladdest is the
Babytown express.
It runs from Dawn to Twilight and you
couldn't count the miles,
For the track is made of fancy and the
ties are laid in smiles.
The good old backwoods pasture gate is
train and engine, too,
With Bud, on top, as engineer, to make
the choo-choo-choo!

Big Sis, the sweet conductor, takes the
tickets on the way,
Collecting hugs and kisses from the ones
who have to pay,
And sometimes, in a merry mood, she
stops the train and then
Goes round among the passengers and
takes the fares again.
It's funny how the tourists, too, are
willing that she should,
Because it takes a lot of fares to make
the service good.

The Babytown express makes stops to
gratify each wish;
It waits at Cookie Station and at Noo-
dles-in-the-Dish.
The noon stop's Milk-and-Crackers and
again at half-past four
It halts at Bread-and-Jelly, nearest point
to Kitchendoor.
The day's last stop is Twilight, where
the evening shadows fall—
Then they tumble in the sleeper—train
crew, passengers and all.

❦

Word Contest.

The children were seated in the library, as it was pouring rain without. Tom looked up from a book and asked, "What's the longest word?"

"I reckon it's valetudinarianism," replied Ben, the "dictionary" of the family.

"Oh, I know a longer one than that," cried May, coming from the window. "It's smiles—a whole mile between its first and last letters."

"How about a word with more than three miles between its first and last syllables?" asked Catherine, smiling.

"Well, slip it," commanded Tom.

"Beleaguered," said Catherine.

Tom grinned. "I've got you all," he informed. "What's the matter with transcontinental? A whole continent between its first and last syllables."

"Oh, I don't know," said Ben, too much satisfied. "Don't you believe interoceanic would go farther than yours? An ocean is wider than any continent, you know."

Then the prize was awarded to Ben.

❦

NEAR TO NATURE.

A teacher in a large village school introduced nature study as a new branch in her classroom. She gave several talks on the trees familiar to the children. The maple, the elm, the spruce and the poplar in turn formed subjects of interesting discourse. The manner of growth, together with the uses o. the various woods, were topics assigned to awaken the observation of the pupils.

One day Miss Brown tested her scholars on their newly acquired knowledge. "Name three kinds of woods and state one use made of each," she wrote on the blackboard.

To her utter amazement one answer paper submitted the following: "In our town there are three kinds of woods. First, there is Kelly's woods, used for pasture. Second, there is Atwell's grove, used for the ash dump. But the third woods is the best of them all—it's Brown's gully, used for picnics."

❦

PERFECTLY RIGHT.

We had experienced some difficulty in teaching the children to say "No, thank you." One day Aunt Maggie said to sister, aged 3:

"Catherine, will you have some bread?"

"No," said Catherine.

"No, what?"

"No bread," came the reply.

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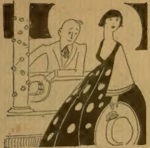


She—"Before we were married you said you were well off."
He—"I was, but I didn't know it."

Just Like Home Folks.

"Have a good time on your trip to New York?"

"Yes, but that town has been greatly over-advertised."

"In what way?"

"Well, I stopped with friends in one of the residential districts, and most of the people there actually went to bed at ten o'clock every night."

Reaching Out.

"We need a few more rough and ready spellbinders," said the campaign manager.

"Why, surely you don't discount the efforts of our polished orators?"

"Cetainly not. But we need some speakers with an up-to-date vocabulary of slang. We've got to appeal to all classes of voters, you know."

Her Opportunity.

He was not a very rapid wooer and she was getting a bit anxious.

Again he called and they sat together in the parlor, "just those two."

A loud rap came at the front door.

"Oh, bother," she said, "who can be calling?"

"Say you're out," said the deceiver.

"Oh, no! That would be untrue," murmured the ingenuous one.

"Then say you are engaged," he urged.

"Oh, may I, Charlie?" she cried as she fell into his arms.

And the man kept on knocking at the front door.

Rather Dull.

"I understand your town is establishing a record for law and order."

"Yes," replied the thoughtful citizen. "And it's rather hard on our local reformers."

"How is that?"

"They haven't had an excuse to call a mass meeting and pass resolutions in more than six months."

Most Likely.

"Well! Well! So Miss Sereleaf is going to be married at last."

"Yes."

"I wonder how she caught the fellow?"

"Off his guard I guess."

The Situation.

"Are your men ambitious?"

"Oh, very. Every man around the place is willing to do anybody's work but his own."

A Paradoxical Trip.

"Why is that fellow always coming around?"

"I guess it is to get a square meal."

A Farewell Gift.

It was to be his last call. They stood on the porch, in the moonlight.

"You are determined?" he said, finally.

"Yes, George, I think it is for the best that we do not see each other again."

"Do you love another?"

"I do, George. I have promised my heart to Harold Updyke."

There was a moment's silence. George stepped back and drew from his pocket a revolver, which glistened in the pale light.

"George, George!" shrieked the girl. "What do you intend to do?" She took hold of his hand.

"Not a great deal," replied George calmly. "I have been calling on you for the last six months, Evelyn, and I have only exterminated about half the dogs in this neighborhood. I want you to take this gun and give it to Updyke. He may want to finish the rest of them."—Puck.

More Satisfactory.

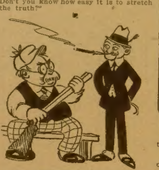
"My husband is so strong that he can lift two tremendous iron balls in each hand at once. Can your husband do that?"

"No, but he's lifted the mortgage from the farm since we were married."

Explained.

"Why is it that truth will rise again when crushed to the earth?"

"Because of its elasticity, of course. Don't you know how easy it is to stretch the truth?"



Friend—"Well, Fritz, did you have any luck on your gunning trip?"
Fritz—"Nein. The only bird I killed was a squirrel and he fell in a pond and was drowned!"

A Prompt Reply.

Johnson recently bought a fine new motor car, and proudly drove home in it to show it off to his wife.

Now, Mrs. Johnson was plain of face but wealthy; moreover, they had had a tiff that morning over breakfast, and she hadn't recovered her equilibrium yet.

"Humph!" she said coldly, as she eyed the glittering car. "It's very nice, but if it hadn't been for my money it wouldn't have been here."

Johnson, stung badly, promptly replied:

"Ah, well, Maria, you must remember that, if it hadn't been for your money, you wouldn't have been here either!"

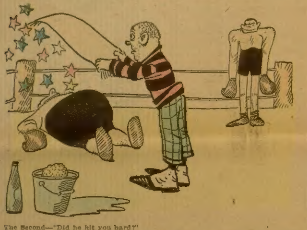
Into a Trap.

"You don't seem to flirt any more."

"Cured?"

"Eh?"

"Twice lately I tried it. And each time the girl improved the opportunity to sell me a tag."



The Second—"Did he hit you hard?"
The Principal—"Judgin' by the lights I seen, about a thousand candle power."

Pretext.

"I think I'll take a day off and go fishing."

"Are you a fisherman?"

"No. But I feel as if I ought to offer some excuse for taking a day off."

One Boon.

"How's life in the suburbs?"

"Well, I'm glad I don't have to buy gasoline for the lawnmower, that's all."

Heredity.

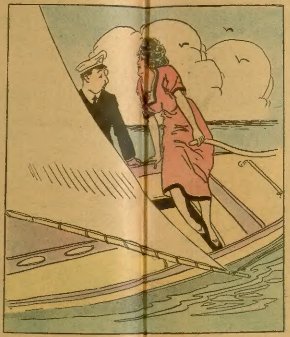
Dottie (aged 6)—"But you have only one dolly. I have seven."

Tottie (aged 8)—"Well, none of our people ever have large families, anyway."

Heard in an Office.

"Blank complains of feeling sick."

"Yes; he smoked a cigar from the wrong pocket."



Frank—"I kept my head when I fell into the water."
Maude—"How fortunate! It must have helped you so nicely to float."

A Continued Absence.

Bones, a hostler, failed to turn up at the livery yard one morning.

"Where's Bones?" the boss asked.

"His father's dead, sir," explained the other hostler.

"Oh!"

The next day again Bones failed to turn up. And the next day still he was absent.

"Bones not about?" said the boss.

"His father," said the other hostler, "as I told you before, sir——"

"Well, look here," said the boss, "you slip on your coat and run round to Bones' house and find out if he intends to stay away all the time his father is dead."

Its Identity.

"We have handsome public baths here in Kansas City," said a resident. "I'll show you——"

"Eh-yah!" interrupted his country cousin, indicating a passing motorcycle with a side car attached. "There goes one of the bathtubs now!"

Indirectly.

"Do you ever wake yourself up snoring?"

"It amounts to that. I frequently wake up the baby."

Diplomacy.

"Pa, what is diplomacy?"

"Diplomacy, my boy is the art of being disagreeable pleasantly."

Just the Way.

Patience—"You belong to the Don't Worry Club, don't you?"

Patrice—"Oh, yes."

"I see they have a meeting tomorrow night."

"Yes, and, do you know, I'm worried to death to know what I'm going to wear."

The Reason.

"I wonder why people don't seem to care to hear me talk."

"It's in the papers why."

"What do you mean?"

"They don't want natural gas."

Brave.

"Has he the courage of his convictions?"

"I should say so. His friends josh him, but he still wears a wrist watch."

The Best Way.

It was during the practical gardening lessons, in a large London school, when the teacher was instructing the boys in the art of protecting plants from the frost.

Jones was observed to be paying no attention to the master's remarks, so the instructor asked him sharply:

"Now, then, Jones, which is the best way to keep the May frosts from the plants?"

"Plant them in June, sir," was Jones' ready reply.

About Due.

Mrs. Cassidy, thinking her husband was rather late in coming home on Saturday with his pay, went to the police station to inquire if he was there.

"Is my Pat here?" she asked.

"No," replied the desk officer; "but sit down; we're expecting him every minute."

He's Busy Now.

"Algie says he doesn't have so much leisure time on his hands as he used to."

"You don't say so! What is he doing."

"He's taken to rolling his own cigarettes."

HER OWN MONEY.

Life's not so bad, upon my word,
We're happy yet,
And many things we can't afford
Contrive to get.

Expected a Good Time.

Rose had only recently come from the Emerald Isle and obtained a place to work for Mrs. Carpenter. After a day or two, she went to call on her married sister.

"I'm goin' to have th' toime av me loife in that house. I see that," confided Rose to her sister.

"What makes ye think that?" asked the sister.

"Well," resumed Rose, "she says to me this mawnin', she says, 'Rose, ye quite understand that I shall be "at home" every Wednesday from three to foive.' Now what de ye think av that? Wid th' misthress only at home for two hours ivery wake ain't I warranted in promisin' meslf a pretty fair toime?"

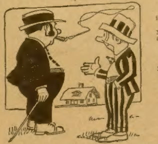
A Deserved Retort.

When ex-Attorney-General Knox was a young lawyer he was in physique not much larger than Tom Thumb. In one of his first cases where he appeared before the court of an adjoining State it was his fortune to be opposed by an attorney a veritable giant in size and possessor of a most intimidating manner.

Going up to young Knox, the giant guffawed down upon him:

"Are you the attorney opposing me? Why, I could put you in my vest pocket."

"Maybe you could," said the unabashed Knox; "but if you did so you would have more law in your pocket than you ever had in your head."



"So you are building a new house, eh? How are you getting along with it?"
"Fine. I've got the roof and the mortgage on and I expect to have the furnace and the sheriff in before summer."

By Contrast.

"Is Gadspur a sympathetic man?"

"In a way he is."

"In what way?"

"When he sits down to a particularly good meal he remarks, 'The starving Poles would enjoy this,' and then proceeds to enjoy it all the more himself."

Clever Youth.

Employer—"Huh! Got off yesterday to go to your grandmother's funeral! Show up this morning with a black eye!"

Office Boy—"Yes, sir; we got to fighting over the property!"

Beauty Adorned.

"You can't paint the lily."

"No? Then I'm subject to hallucinations as I pass along our public thorofares."

Couldn't Help It.

"He seems wedded to his work."

"He ought to be; he married his employer's daughter."—Judge.

Proving an Old Adage.

Jones usually sported a handsome gold watch, but a temporary financial embarrassment recently caused him to part with it—in other words, he pawned it.

"Hallo, old chap!" said a friend, in surprise. "What's happened to that watch of yours?"

"Here it is," replied Jones, blandly displaying a cheap nickel timepiece. "Can't you see properly this morning?"

"But—but," exclaimed the other, "that's a tin watch! The one you usually carry is in a gold case."

"I know all that," said Jones, with a grin; "but circumstances alter cases, old chap."

A Juvenile Tyrant.

"Why do you let that boy play with those costly ornaments? He's bound to break a vase or two."

"I can't do anything with him," wailed the distracted mother. "I have to let him have his own way. He threatens to go out and catch the whooping cough if I don't."

Preposterous.

"I couldn't help but laugh."

"What's the matter?"

"That summer girl who just now climbed aboard a Pullman after telling fourteen sorrowing suitors good-by said she was going to Atlantic City for a rest."

No Waste of Energy.

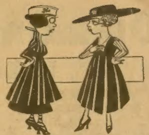
"You never encourage mud-slinging in a campaign?"

"No," replied Senator Sorghum; "if you're going to throw something, throw a rock."

Blissful Ignorance.

"How much does it cost you to run this yacht, old chap?"

"If I knew I wouldn't do it."—Life.



Kathryn—"Yes, I'll admit, I have my faults."
Kittye—"False what—hair, figure or complexion?"

The Inspector's Mistake.

An inspector visiting a provincial school was much worried by the noise of the scholars in the next room. At last, unable to bear it any longer, he opened the door and burst in upon the class.

Seeing one boy, rather taller than the others, talking a great deal, he caught him by the collar, carried him to another room and banged him into a chair, saying:

"Now, sit there and be quiet!"

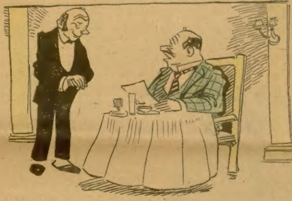
A quarter of an hour later a small head appeared around the door and a meek little voice said:

"Please, sir, you've got our teacher!"

Just the Man for Her.

"So Neurasthenia Hobbs is married. Her husband is a brave man, as she is one of the most restless and excitable women I ever met."

"Oh, I guess it will be all right; he is a composer."



Guest (glancing at check total)—"Is everything down here?"
Waiter—"Everything, sir!"
Guest—"Just cross off the china, linen, and table! I didn't eat them, you know!"

Going Far.

"Your dollar goes farthest in this store."

"Really?"

"Yes; our cash carrier system is nearly half a mile long."

Modern Romance.

"Will you marry me, my pretty maid?"

"How many cylinders has your automobile, sir?" she said.

Professional Proficiency.

"How's your daughter getting on with her music?"

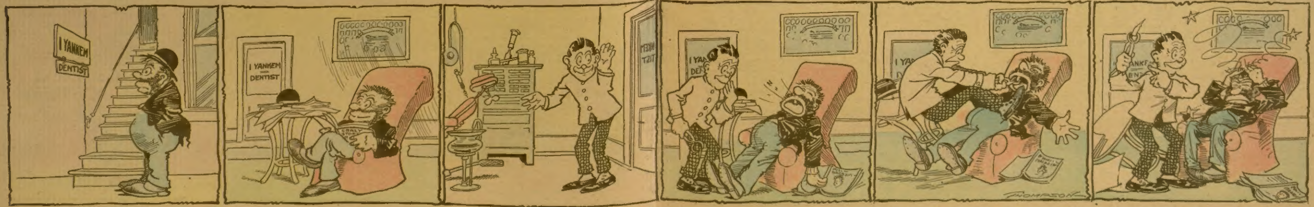
"Fine!" replied Mr. Cumrox. "She sounds like a professional musician; 'specially a piano tuner."

And Got It.

"I hear that poor Bill got blown up in a powder factory."

"He told me he was expecting a raise."

THE FIRST VICTIM



Homeless Homer—"Sufferin' snakes, but it's chilly dis mornin'! Guess I'll go up to that dentist's office an' warm up an' loaf erwhile!

"Dis is sure soft! I'll read de magazines till dey git wise to me an' turn me out."

Dentist Yankem—"Ah, a patient at last! I'll stall around in here a while to make him think I'm busy.

"Poor fellow, I made him wait so long that, worn out with suffering, he has fallen asleep!

"He is my first patient and I can't let my chance slip. If he wakens he might be frightened away. Here goes!

"Ah, sir, I trust I have given you relief! The tooth was a tough one to pull but, believe me, I got it!"

Diamonds and Hearts

By Emma Howard Wight

BROUGHTON pulled himself up over the balcony railing, crossed to the window and looked cautiously into the room. The room, lighted only by the moonlight that sifted in thru the wide window opening upon the balcony, was empty. Broughton stepped inside and looked about him. He found himself in a woman's dainty, beautifully furnished dressing-room. Instinctively he glanced toward the dresser, and his breath whistled across his lips as he caught the shimmer of jewels. Stealthily he crossed to this spot where stood an open jewel case. In the moonlight the caše seemed filled with liquid light, that wavered and shimmered, flecked with many colors.

Broughton, for the moment dazzled, drew back; then a grim smile passed over his lips. He had not expected to find burglarizing so easy. Again he bent over the jewel case. The shimmer of the diamonds was almost uncanny in the moonlight. He stood staring at them. A melodiously toned clock began to strike twelve. Broughton started, then he leaned over the jewel case and plunged in his hand. When he withdrew it his fingers seemed on fire.

A beautiful blonde woman appeared suddenly in the doorway of the room adjoining, in a dainty negligee. She started at the sight of the man, hesitated a moment, then sprang across the room and switched on the electric lights. The man wheeled, the diamond necklace, twined about his fingers, slipping to the floor at his feet.

"Madeleine!" he cried.

She went toward him, staring at him amazedly.

"Louis Broughton!" She paused. He stood silent, looking at her. "What are you doing here?" she asked.

He gave a short laugh. "It's quite evident what I was doing, isn't it?" He stooped, lifted the necklace and laid it upon the dresser.

She looked at him wonderingly, then a little shiver went over her. "You came here to—steal?" she murmured.

He nodded. "Yes, I climbed to the balcony and came in at that window." He paused. She was speechless, she appeared dumfounded. "I was as much surprised to see you, Madeleine, as you were to see me. Newport is glutted with millionaires. I found this particular villa accessible. I did not know it belonged to John Vincent, your husband. You are a brave woman, Madeleine." He looked at her as she stood pale, silent and very beautiful. "Most women would have been scared out of their wits at discovering a burglar in their dressing-room at midnight and would immediately have alarmed the house."

"I am very glad I did not alarm the house," she said.

"It would have been awkward for me, certainly. But you can still make an alarm and deliver me over to the police. It's your right. I am a burglar. If you had not appeared when you did, I would have made off with your jewels. It would have been a rich haul. Rather careless to leave such valuable jewels lying around like that."

"You must be in desperate need," she said, studying him curiously. She moved to the dresser, lifted the necklace and held it out to him. "Take it."

Broughton recoiled, shaking his head. "You are generous." A sullen look crept over his worn, handsome face. "I can't take it."

"You can sell it. It's worth a great deal of money."

"Yes, I know how valuable it is, but I couldn't accept help from you, Madeleine. I am desperately hard up, dead against it; I have fallen about as low as I can fall. But I would rather rot in the gutters or die in jail than accept help from you, Madeleine."

"You are very bitter against me, Louis."

"I have reason to be. You ruined my life."

"Don't say that!"

"Why shouldn't you be told the truth? After you threw me over to marry John Vincent, nothing seemed worth while. I lost hope, ambition. I became reckless, desperate. I did not care what I did or what became of me. In a word, I went straight to the bad."

She looked at him, troubled. "I did not think you would care like that," she said. "I thought you would get over it and forget about me."

He shook his head, the ghost of a smile drifting over his lips. "When a man loves a woman as I loved you, Madeleine, he does not forget so easily, even tho the woman prove unworthy. I loved you, believed in you, and you deluded me into believing you loved me."

"I did love you."

"Not sufficiently to be true to me, to resist the temptation offered by John Vincent's millions." He turned from her with a gesture half-bitter, half-contemptuous.

"A heartless, faithless, mercenary woman, such as you believe me to be, is not worth a man's spoiling his life for," she declared.

"There's some truth in that," admitted Broughton. "I should have been stronger, perhaps, but I wasn't. A man can't reason cold-bloodedly about a thing like that. You see, you destroyed my belief in woman's truth, and when you did that, you killed the best that was in me. I thought you were all that was true and tender and kind. I loved you for your womanliness. I have often wished that you had died. I would have sorrowed for you, but my life would not have been spoiled. Dead, you would have left me my faith, my belief in you. When you took those from me you took—all."

"Louis, I have always thought of you as having made a success in life. And to think that you——" She paused, shuddered, a look of pain on her fair face. "Oh, it seems too dreadful! And to have it placed at my door! Why, it frightens me!"

Broughton shrugged his shoulders. "I suppose you are shocked just now, but in a few days you will have forgotten all about it."

She gave him an odd look. "You think me very heartless, very selfish?"

He turned upon her almost roughly. "Haven't I the best of reasons for thinking so?" he demanded. "You had promised to be my wife. You knew that I loved you devotedly, that all my hopes of happiness were centered in you. But you were pitiless. You threw me over to marry a richer man. But what's the good of raking up the past? What does it avail to reproach you now? Since you don't seem inclined to turn me over to the police, I'll go." He turned to go.

"Louis!" She started after him. He stopped, looking back at her questioningly. "I can't let you go like this, Louis." Her eyes were soft, pitying. "Is there no way in which I can help you?"

He stopped and stood looking at her. "Can you restore my faith in woman's truth?" he asked. "That might help me, but you cannot do it."

She hesitated just a moment, then looked at him with sudden determination.

"Yes, I can," she replied. He stood still, looking at her. "I did not betray you, Louis," she continued. "I was not really untrue to you. I married John Vincent to save my father, not alone from bankruptcy, but from worse—dishonor."

He was silent an instant, then he asked unsteadily, "Madeleine, is that true?"

"Yes, it is true. My father's affairs were in terrible shape; he was frightfully involved. And he had used money belonging to others. It required a large sum of money to save him. There was but one way to obtain it. I took that way—I married John Vincent."

"Madeleine, forgive me for misjudging you!" he pleaded. "I did not know."

"I do not in the least blame you for thinking as you did. It was only natural that you should. I could not explain without putting a stigma on my father. I believed that my first duty was to shield my father. Perhaps I was wrong." She sighed. "I do not know."

"I understand just how you felt about it. It was good of you to tell me—now."

He was studying her eagerly, his handsome, haggard face flushing, a passionate light in his eyes.

"You claim that it was your lost faith in woman's truth that spoiled your life," she said very earnestly. "Well, I have given you back that faith. Your life is still before you. It is not too late to make something of it."

He shook his head gloomily. "I have

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For Backache, Stiff Joints, Rheumatic Pains, and Unbearable Bladder Troubles.

SEND NO MONEY, just your name and address—A Full Complete Treatment SENT ON TRIAL.

My treatment has helped thousands to regain their health. Those with tired, lame aching backs, with unbearable bladder and urinary troubles, others stiff and bent with rheumatism—and it has made them well, the most chronic, severe, long-standing obstinate cases, after all the other remedies they tried had failed. They were suffering, and it eased their pains, soothed their aches, brightened their lives and made them happy, and now I want you to try it, to test it, and see for yourself just what it will do for you.

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STOPS BACKACHE

If you have backache, kidney, bladder trouble or rheumatism, nervousness, tired and worn-out feeling, if you make water often, getting up during the night, if it smarts and burns in passing, if there is sediment or brick dust write for my treatment without a minute's delay.

I know you want to be well and strong again, so you can work, and walk, without pain; so you can sleep without disturbance, and wake up refreshed and rested, able to use every muscle, nerve, cord and joint of your body, without suffering misery all the time.

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Take it when it comes. Use half of it, and see just what it does. Then when you know it is helping you, when you know you are getting better, just send me a small amount, an amount within your easy reach—an amount you can easily afford to spare—that is all I ask. I know you'll be willing to do your part when it helps you—and your word is good enough for me. Try it first, pay afterwards when you know, not before. When you have used half of it, if you are not satisfied, return what's left and pay nothing. Don't send a penny in your letter.

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If You Sell Two You Get One Free. You can make Big Money selling our Watches, Jewelry and Novelties. Send for our Wholesale Catalogue with full particulars and Special Discount to Agents and Dealers. Address M. BYRNE & CO., BID. 1155 Dearborn St. Chicago, Ill.

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A new illustrated book in 42 chapters. Tells the provocation that led up to the most daring gun fight on record, where they shot the Judge, Sheriff, States attorney, 3 Jurors, and 8 others in the Hillsville Court Room. All crimes have a woman back of it, and BOYS this one is worth reading. Large bound book in plain wrapper for TEN Cents.

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Send 50c in stamps and we will mail you a Dollar of Wolcott's Pain Paint powders, with full directions to make sixty 25-cent bottles. Pain Paint relieves pain; Headache, Toothache, Neuralgia; cools the parts where applied. Superficial burns will not blister. Sold 40 years by agents.

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September Morn Ring—Free

The beautiful raised figure of the young girl is a wonderful reproduction in metal, of the original painting. The background is hard enameled in two colors to represent sea and sky. Ring is made of "Everbright Silver" warranted five years. We send it, your correct size, for only 12c to help pay advertising.

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LADIES, $1000! I positively guarantee my great Successful "Compound." Safely relieves some of the longest, most obstinate, abnormal affections in 3 to 5 days. No harm, pain or interference with work. Mail $1.50, Double strength, $2.00. BOOKLET FREE. Write today.
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I was badly ruptured while lifting a trunk several years ago. Doctors said my only hope of cure was an operation. Trusses did me no good. Finally I got hold of something that quickly and completely cured me. Years have passed and the rupture has never returned, although I am doing hard work as a carpenter. There was no operation, no lost time, no trouble. I have nothing to sell, but will give full information about how you may find a complete cure without operation, if you write to me. Eugene M. Pullen, Carpenter, 409 C Marcellus Avenue, Manasquan, N. J. Better cut out this notice and show it to any others who are ruptured—you may save a life or at least stop the misery of rupture and the worry and danger of an operation.

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Gold plated Locket set with sparkling stone and 22-inch Chain, one Signet Nethersole Bracelet to fit any arm and these four Gold Plated Rings, all given Free for selling only 12 pieces of our jewelry at 10 cts. each. Write for them.

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CRANOLENE Kills Itching Germs

No internal medicine will cure Eczema—only by the application of Cranolene can the Eczema microbe be destroyed. You pay us no money until you say you are cured. Write today for free supply.

MILLS CHEMICAL CO., 151 Mills Building, Girard, Kansas

Show This to Some Unfortunate Eczema Sufferer

Mr. H. [illegible] Neb., writes: "I [illegible]
Postal will bring you FREE what Mr. Attcherry gratefully paid $5 for.

fallen too low," he muttered. "I am a—thief."

"No one knows save you and myself," declared Madeleine. "No one need ever know."

"Madeleine, how you must despise me!"

She shook her head. "No, I pity you."

"With you for my wife, Madeleine, I would have made a success in life. You would have been my inspiration."

She came nearer to him. "You can still do it." He turned away his head despondently. She slipped the diamond necklace that she still held in his coat pocket. "Put the miserable past behind you, Louis. Forget it and start anew. Promise me that you will."

There was a moment's silence, then Broughton said quietly: "I will, Madeleine. I promise you."

"I am more than glad to hear you say that, Louis. To have to remember you as I have seen you tonight would be most painful. But now I can think of you as redeeming the past, as living a life that is worth while."

At that moment the door opening upon the corridor was thrown open and John Vincent, a dark, good-looking, well-groomed man about 40 years of age, came quickly into the room with a pistol in his hand. He stopped abruptly, staring dazedly at his wife and Broughton. There was an instant of tense silence, then John Vincent addressed his wife with ominous calmness.

"It seems, madam, that I made a mistake. I took your lover for a burglar," he said.

Madeleine stared. "My lover?"

"Yes. Is there any other way that you can account for the presence of Louis Broughton in your apartments at midnight? I was below on the lawn and I saw a man climb to that balcony and enter this room. I took him for a burglar, armed myself and waited for him to come out. He remained so long that I concluded I had better come and look for him, and discovered my—mistake!"

"You made no mistake," declared Broughton. "I entered this room with the intention of robbing. Mrs. Vincent came in as I was in the act of rifling her jewel case."

Vincent laughed contemptuously. "You cannot fool me with such a flimsy subterfuge," he declared.

"Fool you?" exclaimed Broughton.

"Yes. A man who is not an out-and-out blackguard will lie to shield a woman's honor, of course."

"It is not a lie. Your wife will tell you that what I assert is true."

Vincent looked at his wife. "Louis Broughton is not my lover," she said.

"Did you come into this room and catch him in the act of robbing your jewel case?" asked Vincent.

She was silent. The two men waited a moment and then Broughton exclaimed, pleadingly: "Madeleine, why don't you speak?"

"I have nothing further to say," she declared.

Broughton gazed at her helplessly. Vincent smiled coldly. "Mrs. Vincent refuses to stand for the burglar story," he said.

At that moment, Broughton thrust his hand nervously into his coat pocket and discovered the diamond necklace. He guessed instinctively that it had been put there by Madeleine.

"I think I can prove, however, that the burglar story is not a fake," he declared. He turned directly to Vincent. "Examine the contents of your wife's jewel case and see if there is not something missing."

Vincent went to the dresser and made a rapid examination of the jewel case. Then he turned and looked at Broughton.

"There is a diamond necklace missing," he said.

Broughton quietly produced the necklace. "Here it is," he said, holding it out to Vincent. "Telephone the chief of police and give me into custody."

Madeleine spoke, as Vincent stood irresolute. "Louis Broughton did not steal that necklace. I slipped it into his pocket without his knowledge," she said. "He only discovered it was there a few moments ago."

Vincent lifted his pistol and pointed it direct at Broughton's heart. Madeleine gasped. Broughton stood quietly, looking steadily at Vincent.

"What are you going to do?" cried Madeleine, starting toward her husband.

"I am going to kill your lover," replied Vincent.

"No! no!" cried Madeleine. "He is not my lover. He told the truth. He came here to steal."

Vincent looked at her pale, lovely face. An odd smile flickered over his lips, he slowly lowered the pistol. Madeleine collapsed suddenly upon a couch. Vincent tossed aside the pistol and bent over her

"Madeleine!" he murmured.

She clung to him, sobbing. "John! John!"

A sudden great radiance lighted John Vincent's face. He gathered his wife in his arms. Broughton turned and went toward the window. Once he stopped and looked back. Absorbed in the bliss of the wonderful discovery that had come to them, they had forgotten all about him.

Broughton went out quietly the way he had come.

* * *

A New Scheme.

An addition to the ordinary electric fan is an arrangement by which it may be made to supply perfume to the room. The spokes of the fan wheel are of a fine wire screening and they whirl thru a small tank of perfumed water, placed at the base of the wheel. If desired, a disinfectant may be substituted for the perfume in the water. Thus the city living-room may be given the tang of the pine woods, the spicy perfume of the tropic or the salt breath of the sea.

ACTRESS TELLS SECRET

A Well Known Actress Tells How She Darkened Her Gray Hair With a Simple Home Made Mixture.

Miss Blanche Rose, a well-known actress, who darkened her gray hair with a simple preparation which she mixed at home, in a recent interview at Chicago, Ill., made the following statement: "Any lady or gentleman can darken their gray hair and make it soft and glossy with this simple recipe, which they can mix at home. To a half pint of water add 1 oz. of bay rum, a small box of Barbo Compound, and ¼ oz. of glycerine. These ingredients can be bought at any drug store at very little cost. Apply to the hair twice a week until it becomes the required shade. This will make a gray haired person look 20 years younger. It is also fine to promote the growth of hair, and relieves itching and dandruff."

Why John Quit Drinking

By John's Wife

I'm the happiest little woman,
In all this little town:
And my merry laugh and singing,
Takes the place of sigh and frown.
For JOHN HAS QUIT HIS DRINKING
And is like himself once more,
And the world is just a paradise
With such happiness in store!

One day I read some verses—
"Mary's Miracle," the name,
And I said, that's John exactly,
And I'll send and get the same.
So I sent for GOLDEN TREATMENT.
(As sly as sly could be)
And I put it in John's supper
And I put it in his tea.

And it didn't taste a little bit;
Had no odor, so, you see—
It was smoothest kind of sailing
For little Doctor Me.
And I watched and prayed and waited,
(And cried some, too, I guess),
And I didn't have the greatest faith,
I'm ashamed now to confess.

And John never thought a minute,
He was being cured of drink,
And soon he's as well as any one,
It makes me cry to think!
Just makes me cry for gladness,
I'm so proud to be his wife—
Since he is cured of drinking,
And leads a nice, new life.

"Since John he quit a-drinking!"
I can't say it times enough!
And hates and loathes a liquor
As he would a poison stuff.
And when I say my prayers at night
As thankful as can be—
I pray for John the most of all—
Then GOLDEN TREATMENT.

Home Treatment For Drunkards

Odorless and Tasteless—Any Lady Can Give It Secretly at Home in Tea, Coffee or Food.

Costs Nothing to Try.

If you have a husband, son, brother, father or friend who is a victim of liquor, all you have to do is to send your name and address on the coupon below. You may be thankful as long as you live that you did it.

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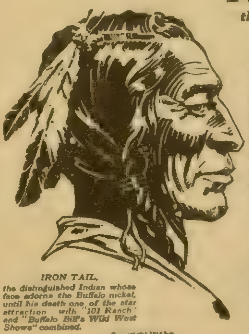

IRON TAIL,
the distinguished Indian whose face adorns the Buffalo nickel, until his death one of the star attraction with "101 Ranch" and "Buffalo Bill's Wild West Shows" combined.

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CRIMP CUT
LONG BURNING PIPE AND CIGARETTE TOBACCO

You put a pipe on the job or roll a cigarette with Prince Albert for "packing" and *find out for yourself* that P. A. will beat your fondest expectations of tobacco enjoyment for flavor, fragrance and coolness!

Buy Prince Albert everywhere tobacco is sold, in toppy red bags, 5c; tidy red tins, 10c; handsome pound and half-pound tin humidors, and in that clever pound crystal-glass humidor with sponge-moistener top that keeps the tobacco in such fine condition.

R. J. REYNOLDS TOBACCO COMPANY
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10¢ DOWN and you get this Genuine Diamond

Easiest way on earth to get a guaranteed diamond. Send only 10c. Tell us how you prefer to pay the balance on easy terms. We will then send you a genuine, high grade guaranteed diamond and at a less cost to you than you would ordinarily pay for it spot cash. A **money back guarantee.** Now is your opportunity to wear a beautiful, genuine, guaranteed diamond. Send coupon today.

1001 Flat Belcher Mounting $50.

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On the Balance Send us only 10c to show that you really want the diamond. Select the style ring you wish. You say how much time you want and how you prefer to make the payments. This is a rare opportunity to invest your savings in a genuine diamond that you can always exchange. *Send only 10c today.*

Send Only 10c Send us only ten cents today and the size of your ring so we may ship your diamond without delay. When the diamond comes to you satisfy yourself as to its beauty and magnificent value. If you are not pleased send it back at our expense. Send the coupon and 10c today.

Send Coupon Send 10 cents today (stamps or silver). Use coupon or a letter and receive your guaranteed diamond on our money back offer. Send only 10c today and get a diamond on the easy plan.

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10c COUPON

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Gentlemen: Enclosed find ten cents. Send ring No.________ I agree to pay $________ when I see the diamond and if I am satisfied, I will pay the balance at $________ per week/month until $50 is paid to you. If not satisfied you are to return my money.

*My Name*________________
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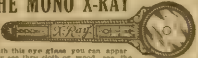
THE MONO X-RAY

10 cts



With this eye glass you can apparently see thru cloth or wood, see the bones in the body, makes the flesh look transparent. An optical illusion. By mail 10 cts. Stamps or coin. The Ardee Co. Box 225, Stamford, Conn.

MENDING TISSUE THE WONDER OF THE AGE. No sewing or darning. Repairs clothing, silk, satin, cotton goods, ribbons, fabrics of all kinds, kid [illegible] umbrellas, parasols, stockings, etc. Package, postpaid 10 cents, three packages 25 cents. Address PENN PUBLISHING CO., Parnassus, Pa.

The Sanitary Aluminum Tea and Coffee Strainer

Being made in a solid piece it has no joints to catch dirt, contagious germs or to retain greasy substances. The metal of which it is constructed prohibits rust, and although far lighter, it will outlast the best wire strainer.
Price 15 cents. W. C. WATKINS, Parnassus, Pa.

Classified Want Ads

Classified Want Ad Information

The rate for one insertion in Chicago Ledger and one insertion in The Saturday Blade is 30 cents a word, minimum 14 words, less 3% for cash. Each initial and group of figures is counted as a word, and the name and address are also counted. This is the minimum rate; neither more nor less is charged, irrespective of size of ad or number of insertions. An ad may appear in both publications of the same week, or in the Blade of one week and the Ledger of the next

W. D. BOYCE CO., Publisher, 500 N. Dearborn St. CHICAGO, ILL.

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TRAVELING SALESMEN WANTED—EXPErience unnecessary. Earn big pay while you learn at home during spare time. Only eight weeks required. Hundreds of good positions open. Write today for large list of openings and testimonials from hundreds of students we have placed in positions paying $100 [illegible] $500 per month. Address nearest office. [illegible] National Salesmen Training Ass'n, Chicago, New York San Francisco.

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ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS REWARD IF this is not the greatest money-making house-to-house proposition. N. R. G. Little Wizard Labor Saver washes clothes in 10 minutes without rubbing. Contains no lime, lye, paraffin, wax or other injurious chemical and cannot possibly injure the clothes or hands. Nothing like it on the market. Positive [illegible] of the age—sells for 15c, enough for 5 [illegible] washings. We supply one free sample with every package you buy and guarantee the sale of same. Just leave the free sample with the housewife and, when you call again, she is eagerly awaiting to become your steady customer. Secure territorial rights at once, or you will regret it. A 1c postal brings sample and full particulars. [illegible] Moon Mfg [illegible] Desk [illegible]

AGENTS—MEN OR WOMEN, A REAL HONest-to-goodness sells-itself line—over 250 light weight, popular priced necessities. We pay 100% commission. $[illegible] a day can be made at the start. No capital —no experience required. Enormous demand—sells fast—big repeater. Valuable territory opened—all or [illegible] agent's outfit furnished free. Write today. Postal will do. American Products Co., 9254 3rd St., Cincinnati, Ohio.

BIG TEXTILE MILLS WANT AMBITIOUS men and women everywhere to show latest dress fabrics, neckwear, hosiery, underwear, and sweaters. 400 styles. Easy sales. Values beat stores. Many making over $30 weekly. All or spare time. Complete sample outfit starts you. Steadfast Mills, 18 Remsen St., Cohoes, N. Y.

WOULD $150 MONTHLY AND AN AUTO OF your own to travel in as General Agent, handling remarkable sellers, King Lightning Patch Vulcanizers, Winger Ride E. Z. Shock Absorber, and King Anti-Thief Combination Auto Switch Lock, guaranteed thief proof, interest you? Then address U. S. Mfg. Co., Dept. 121, Wolcott, Ind.

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WOULD $150 MONTHLY AS GENERAL Agent for $100,000 corporation and a Ford Auto of your own, Free, introducing Stock and Poultry remedies, Dips, Disinfectants, etc., interest you? Then address Royoleum Co-Operative Mfg. Co., A. Monticello, Ind.

SOAP AGENTS MAKE MORE MONEY SELLing Linro Products. Coffee, Flavorings, Spices, Soaps, Perfumes—135 other items. Big commission. Exclusive territory. Freight allowed. Free sample case. No deposit required. Write for catalog today. Linro Company, 103 Linro Bldg., St. Louis, Mo.

INTELLIGENT MAN OR WOMAN TO *travel and appoint local representatives* for leading house. Nine months contract guaranteeing expenses and $18.00 a week Universal Bible House, 704 Winston Bldg., Philadelphia.

EXCLUSIVE SALES AGENT WANTED IN every county. Position worth $750 to $[illegible]00 yearly. We specially train our agents. Have us show you. Novelty Cutlery Co., 123 Bar St., Canton, Ohio.

AGENTS—$60.00 A WEEK, TRAVEL BY automobile and introduce 300 candle power coal oil Lantern. We furnish auto. Write for particulars. Thomas Co., 811 North St., Dayton, Ohio.

SUIT $3.75, PANTS $1.00, MADE TO measure. For even a better offer than this write and ask for free samples and styles. Knickerbocker Tailoring Co., Dept. 514, Chicago, Ill.

$150.00 SALARY FOR 60 DAYS' WORK paid woman or man in each town to distribute free circulars, and take orders for White Ribbon Concentrated Flavoring. J. S. Ziegler [illegible] 7M E. Harrison St., Chicago.

LARGE MANUFACTURER WANTS REPREsentatives to sell shirts, underwear, hosiery, dresses, waists, skirts, direct to homes. Write for free samples. Madison Mills, 686 Broadway, New York City.

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AGENTS—SELL RELIABLE CUSTOM MADE raincoats. Big commission. Complete sample line free. Temple Raincoat Co., Box 61, Templeton, Mass.

AGENTS—I'VE A NEW SOAP GAME that's a dandy. New stuff; 100% profits. [illegible] and full layout free. Write quick. Lacassian Co., Dept. 21, St. Louis, Mo.

WE START YOU IN SOAP AND TOILET Goods Business without a dollar. Experience unnecessary. Carnation Co., 3024 Easton [illegible]

WELLER'S TOILET PREPARATIONS, 335B [illegible] Terms free [illegible]

MAKE YOUR OWN EXTRACTS AND PERfumes. H Lake, Adair, Ill.

HELP WANTED

MARRY—MEN AND WOMEN SEND FOR MY co-operative and profit sharing Matrimonial plan. Nothing ever like it for quick and satisfactory results. Profits divided with co-work[illegible] [illegible]ticulars Free. H. A. Horton, Desk A, [illegible] Mich.

$20 TO $35 PER MONTH EXTRA MONEY to any employed person without interfering with regular work. No selling, no canvassing. Positively no investment. Unemployed need not apply. Address The Silver Mirror Co., Inc., 215 W. Randolph St., Chicago, Ill.

HELP WANTED—(Continued)

WANTED—MEN AND WOMEN, 18 OR over, as Government Railway Mail Clerks —City Carriers—Clerks at Washington. $75.00 month. Write for list of positions obtainable. Franklin Institute, Dept. P 30, Rochester, N. Y.

LADY OR GENTLEMAN TO TRAVEL FOR old-established firm. No canvassing. Staple line. $18 weekly, pursuant to contract. Expenses advanced. G. K. Nichols, Philadelphia, Pa. Pepper Bldg.

EVERY READER OF THE LEDGER OUGHT to read these ads. Every week splendid chances to make money—to better yourself—to buy, sell or exchange goods or services, are offered here.

$25 WEEK. BECOME AUTO CHAUFfeurs. Learn while earning. Sample lessons free. Franklin Institute, Dept. P 810, Rochester, N. Y.

FREE—MONEY MAKING FORMULA, SELF addressed stamped envelope and two names. Capital Agency, 49-S, Washington, D. C.

BIG MONEY FOR YOU IN THE REAL EState Business. Complete Instruction $2. Write John Hopkins, 220 Broadway, New York.

$25 WEEKLY COLLECTING NAMES AND addresses. Send stamp. Superba Co., W52, Baltimore, Md

MALE HELP WANTED

HERE'S A SURE MONEY-MAKING PROPOsition. Big profit selling Dr. Scott's Magnetic Corset. Relieves backache. The field is yours (not sold in stores). Exclusive territory given. Write for catalog of specialties. Liberal proposition. Est. 1878. Free—sample cake of soap. Pall Mall Electric Co., 128 W. 34 St., N. Y.

MEN BECOME LOCOMOTIVE FIREMEN, Brakemen, Electric Motormen and Conductors and earn Big Money. Hundreds placed to work $75 and $100 month. No experience necessary. Write at once. Inter Railway Dept. (A), Majestic Bldg., Indianapolis, Ind.

CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS OPEN the way to good Government positions. I can coach you by mail at small cost. Full particulars free to any American citizen of eighteen or over. Write today for Booklet C. E. 1084. Earl Hopkins, Washington, D. C.

GOVERNMENT RAILWAY MAIL, POST OFfice, rural carrier "exams" everywhere soon. *Get prepared by former Government civil service examiner.* Booklet free. Arthur Robert Patterson, Rochester, N. Y.

MAIL CARRIERS WANTED EVERYWHERE. $70 month. Write for list positions obtainable. Franklin Institute, Dept. P 170, Rochester, N. Y.

BE A DETECTIVE. EARN FROM $150.00 to $300.00 per month; travel over the world. Write C. T. Ludwig, 320 Westover Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

GOVERNMENT EXAMINATIONS — THORough instruction, $5. Returned if not appointed. Particulars free. American Civil Service School, Washington, D. C.

NO STRIKE: 8 HOUR DAY. MEN EVERYwhere. Firemen, Brakemen, Baggagemen, $120. Colored Porters. Experience unnecessary. 686 Railway Bureau, E. St. Louis, Ill.

NATIONAL DETECTIVE AGENCY WANTS man from each County to learn Detective work, and represent Agency. Write P. O. Box 867, Pittsburg, Pa.

EARN $25 WEEKLY SILVERING MIRRORS New System, free particulars. Abell, Box 62, Davenport, Iowa.

GOVERNMENT FARMERS NEEDED. BIG salaries. Permanent job. Light work. Write, Ozment, 68F, St. Louis, Mo.

SILVERING MIRRORS, PLATING TABLEware, auto-brass. Home booklet plans free. Clarence Sprinkle, Dept. 2, Marion, Ind.

FEMALE HELP WANTED

A RARE OPPORTUNITY; COMFORTABLE living; home sewing; plain cloth seams. Any sewing machine. Steady. No canvassing. No triflers wanted. Samples 10c. Returned if not satisfactory. Home Sewers Co., Jobbers' Sewing, BL7, Rehoboth, Del.

REFINED WOMEN WANTED TO INTROduce Priscilla Fabrics, Hosiery, Underwear, Dresses, in spare time. Fascinating plan. Write for samples. Fitzcharles Company, Department 126, Trenton, New Jersey.

CHURCH OR CLUB WORKERS. 200% selling our 25c. Home Necessity. Used every day of the year. Send 10c. for sample and plan. The Sanicula Chemical Company, Toledo, Ohio.

WANTED—APRON MAKERS, SEND twenty cents. Returned if dissatisfied. Kenwood Shops, A6238 South Park Ave., Chicago.

FIVE BRIGHT, CAPABLE LADIES TO travel, demonstrate and sell dealers. $25 to $50 per week. Railroad fare paid. Goodrich Drug Company, Dept 85, Omaha, Neb.

WANTED—DUST CAPS MADE. SEND 20C; returned if dissatisfied. Household Garment Company, A6238 South Park Ave., Chicago.

OLD COINS WANTED

WILL PAY $100.00 FOR TRADE DOLLAR 1885; $7.00 for 1853 Quarter without arrows; $750.00 for certain $5.00 gold without motto. Cash premiums for rare coins to 1912. Get posted. Send 4c. Get our large Coin Circular. Numismatic Bank, Dept. 12, Fort Worth, Texas.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

INVEST $10—MAY MAKE FORTUNE! MILlions being made by fortunate investors in Great Southern Oil Fields. Single wells have produced upwards of $15,000.00 daily. Production Absolutely Guaranteed. Small monthly payments secures Big interest with us in valuable oil leases on which we plan to drill many wells. Write quick. Offer limited. Great Southern Oil Association, 1300 Carter Building, Houston, Texas.

$15 INVESTED MAY MAKE $1,000 YEARly. Gets Warranty Deed, also interest in Co-operative oil well we're getting ready to drill in big gusher oil territory. $1 cash, $1 monthly. Four lots $56. Buy before raise in price, which may be soon. Particulars free. Triangle Oil Company, 407 Carter Bldg., Houston, Texas.

NAMES

WE PAY 25c EACH FOR NAMES AND ADdresses. Send dime for contract. Directory, Grand Rapids, Mich.

FARMS WANTED

FARMS WANTED— HAVE 7,000 BUYERS; describe your unsold property. 504 Farmers Exchange, Denver, Colo.

FARM LANDS

PROSPERITY IN CANADA—$900,000,000 IN new wealth added in 1915. Enormous crops and low taxation make farmers rich. Wheat average, 36.16 bushels per acre in Alberta, 28.75 bushels per acre in Saskatchewan, 28.50 bushels per acre in Manitoba. Taxes average $24 and will not exceed $35 per quarter section, includes all taxes; no taxes on improvements. Free schools and full religious liberty, good climate. Get your farm home from the Canadian Pacific Railway. 20 years to pay. Good land from $11 to $30 per acre; irrigated lands from $35, and the government guarantees your land and water titles. Balance, after first payment, extended over nineteen years, with interest at 6%; privileges of paying in full any time. Before final payment becomes due your farm should have paid for itself. We will lend you up to $2,000 in improvements in certain districts, with no security other than the land itself. Particulars on request. Ready-made farms for sale. Special easy terms. Loans for livestock. In defined districts, after one year's occupation, under certain conditions, we advance cattle, sheep and hogs to farmers up to a value of $1,000. We want you; we can afford to help you. We own the land; we want the land cultivated. Our interests are mutual. Buy direct and get your farm home from the Canadian Pacific Railway. Send for free book. J. S. Dennis, Assistant to the President, Canadian Pacific Railway, 94 Ninth Ave., Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

CALIFORNIA LAND $1 PER ACRE CASH. Balance purchase 90c. month per acre. Immediate possession given. No taxes. No interest. Level San Joaquin Valley. Only four hours from San Francisco. 5 acres up. Clear; ready to plow; open ditch irrigation $1 acre per annum. Particulars, maps, photographs, free. Stevinson Colony, 785 Market St., San Francisco.

MISSOURI LAND

POOR MAN'S CHANCE—$5.00 DOWN, $5.00 monthly, buys 40 acres productive land; some timber, near town, price $200. $10 monthly buys 80 acres. Box 425-S, Carthage, Mo.

REAL ESTATE

BEST OPPORTUNITIES TODAY ARE IN the South for farm and other homeseekers. Low priced lands, largest profits per acre in grain, alfalfa and other crops, healthful home regions; openings for live stock, dairy, poultry, fruit and truck farmers. Write for literature. M. V. Richards, Ind. & Agr. Commr., Room 5 Southern Railway, Washington, D. C.

LAST GREAT GOVERNMENT OPENING— 3,000,000 acres rich farm grazing and timber lands. Special map and information $1.00. Eugene Eaton Locator, 610 Main, Brandon, Oregon.

FARM LANDS FOR SALE.

YOU CAN DO BETTER ON A SOUTHERN farm. Send for a year's subscription free to our beautifully illustrated magazine, The Southern Homeseeker, which tells all about good, low priced land and southern opportunities. Write F. H. LaBaume, Agrl. Agt. N. & W. Ry., 248 Arcade Bldg., Roanoke, Va.

10 ACRES MAKE YOU INDEPENDENT. Excellent tracts for chickens, fruit, truck; near town; best county in Michigan. Only $250; $5 down, $4 monthly. Other lands for general farming. Write for free literature. Swigart Land Co., X1249 First National Bank Bldg., Chicago, Ill

MOVING PICTURE BUSINESS

MAKE MONEY QUICK—IN MOVING PICture business. We start you and furnish guaranteed outfit on easy payment plan. No experience needed. Catalog free. Monarch Film Service, 228 Union Ave., Dept. C. Memphis, Tenn

$35.00 PROFIT NIGHTLY, SMALL CAPITAL starts you. No experience needed. Our machines are used and endorsed by Government institutions. Catalog Free. Atlas Moving Picture [illegible]

INSECTS WANTED

CASH PAID FOR BUTTERFLIES, INSECTS, every year for artwork. Beginners. Folder free. Sinclair, Box 244, D-90, Los Angeles, Cal.

MOTION PICTURE PLAYS

PHOTOPLAYS, PLOTS WANTED; NEW company; submit in any form; no school agency; protection guaranteed [illegible] postage. California Scenario Company, Inc., Wesley Roberts Bldg., Los Angeles, Cal.

WRITE PHOTOPLAYS, SHORT STORIES, poems; $100 each. No correspondence course. Details free. Atlas Publishing Co., 344 Cincinnati.

WRITE PHOTOPLAYS: $25-$300 PAID. EXperience unnecessary; details free to new writers. Producers League, 400, St. Louis.

INVENTIONS

INVENTIONS COMMERCIALIZED ON CASH and royalty basis. Inventors and manufacturers write at once. Adam Fisher Mfg. Co., 2044 Railway Exchange, St. Louis, Mo.

HONEY

BEST QUALITY NEW CLOVER HONEY. 30 lb. can $3.60; two or more cans, $3.45 each. Satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded. Sample 10 cts. Price list free. M. V. Facey, Preston, Minn.

HEIRS WANTED

HEIRS—THOUSANDS OF FAMILIES ARE wanted to claim fortunes. Many now living in poverty are rich, but don't know it. Our 100-page index, entitled "Missing Heirs and Next of Kin," alphabetically arranged, contains authentic list of unclaimed estates and heirs wanted and advertised for in America and abroad to claim fortunes. Also contains Chancery Court of England and Ireland lists, and Bank of England unclaimed dividend list. Thousands of names in book. Yours or your ancestors names may be among them. Send [illegible] stamp at once for descriptive circular. International Claim Agency, 8, Pittsburgh Pa

SHORT STORIES WANTED

WRITERS!—STORIES, POEMS, PLAYS, etc., are wanted for publication. Literary Bureau, B4, Hannibal, Mo.

PATENTS

PATENTS SECURED OR FEE RETURNED. Actual search and patentability report free. Send sketches and description, or model, of your invention. My patent sales service gets full value. 1916 Edition ninety-page patent book free. George P. Kimmel, 260 [illegible] Washington, D. C.

WANTED, AN IDEA! WHO CAN THINK of some simple thing to patent? Protect your ideas, they may bring you wealth. Write for "Needed Inventions," "Patent Buyers," and "How to Get Your Patent and Your Money." Randolph & Co., Patent Attorneys Dept. 174, Washington, D. C.

"PATENTS AND PATENT POSSIBILITIES" is a 72-page treatise telling what to invent and where to sell it. Manufacturers constantly writing for patents. Help supply the demand. Books free. H. S. Hill, 993 McLachlen Building, Washington, D. C.

INVENT SOMETHING; YOUR IDEAS MAY bring wealth; our free book tells what to invent and how to obtain a patent, through our new credit system; write today. Waters & Co., 4276 Warder Bldg., Washington, D. C.

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PATENTS THAT PROTECT. ADVICE AND books free. Highest references. Watson E. Coleman, Patent Lawyer, 624 F St., Washington, D. C.

PERSONAL

PERSONAL—WANTED QUICK—NAME AND address of reliable single man who would marry wealthy lady who could assist him financially. Enough said. If interested, write quick for more particulars. Address Allen Ward (B 520), Valley, Nebr.

WEAK, NERVOUS, RUN DOWN MEN: REmember we Cure chronic, nervous, blood, kidney, bladder and private diseases. Book, symptom blank and advice free, sealed. Dr. Meyers, 316 Nicollet Ave Minneapolis Minn.

MARRY RICH. BE HAPPY AND PROSPERous. Big list of descriptions and photos of [illegible] people with means free. Sealed confidential. Either sex. Standard Club, Box 607, Grayslake, Ill.

MARRY—FREE PHOTOS, BEAUTIFUL ladies, descriptions and directory; pay when married. New Plan Co., Dept. 21, Kansas City, Mo.

MARRY—MARRIAGE DIRECTORY WITH photos and description free. Pay when married. The Exchange, Dept. 28, Kansas City, Mo.

MEN, IF NERVOUS, WEAK, RUN DOWN, write today for a trial package of Herculin, the wonderful upbuilding tonic. M Oswald Co., 318 West 42d St., New York

MARRIAGE PAPER WITH NAMES, ADdresses and descriptions [illegible] ads published fr[illegible] Box 404, Sheridan, Wyo

GOITRE CAN POSITIVELY BE CURED with Glandoin. Write and inclose stamp for information. Custar Drug Co., Custar Ohio.

ARTISTS' MODELS, BATHING GIRLS, PAjama girls, real photos. Send dime for samples and list. Art Studios, 18 Bowdoin S[illegible]

MARRY IF LONELY, HUNDREDS RICH wish marriage; strictly confidential, [illegible]criptions free. "The Successful Club," Box [illegible]

OLDEST, LARGEST CLUB, 60,000 MEM[illegible] Mrs. Wrubel, Box [illegible], Oakland.

MARRIAGE PAPER FREE; BEST PUBlication for sure results; reliable. Eastern Agency 55, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

GET MARRIED — BEST MATRIMONIAL [illegible] published [illegible] [illegible]pondent, Tol[illegible]

WEALTHY FARMER'S DAUGHTER, 30, lonely, will marry. Address [illegible] Mission Unity, San Francisco, Cal.

DARE YOU WRITE, A WESTERN FARMER, worth $60,000, seeking marriage. "Sincere" [illegible] 4th St., San Francisco

Chicago Ledger

Entered as second class matter June 25, 1885, at the postoffice at Chicago, Illinois, under act of March 3, 1879.

Published Every Saturday

By W. D. BOYCE CO., CHICAGO, ILL.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

Single subscriptions to the Chicago Ledger by mail $1.00 a year, 50 cents for six months, in advance. Remittances should be made by Bank Draft, Registered Letter, Postoffice or Express Money Order, payable to the Chicago Ledger. The address tab on your paper shows the date to which your subscription is paid.

BACK NUMBERS.

Back numbers of the Ledger promptly mailed. Always give the dates desired plainly written accompanied by your full address. Price [illegible] cents per copy.

ADVERTISING RATES.

For Display, $2.50 each Agate Line; for Classified, 30 cents a word, per insertion for circulation of the Chicago Ledger and The Saturday Blade combined. These two weeklies have an average circulation of

5,000,000

READERS WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS

There are sermons in stones—also ice cream in bricks.

Everybody knows how everybody else ought to do things.

The man who sleeps in church doesn't always dream of heaven.

Some wirepullers are telegraph linemen and some are politicians.

When there's a right way and a wrong way, the average man goes wrong.

When a woman hasn't any more to say she is willing to let a man talk.

The average man would rather blow his own horn than listen to a band concert.

Talk is cheap, but like other cheap things it is apt to prove expensive in the end.

Many a man would rather lie when asked for information than say: "I don't know."

While a man's will may be law, in the case of a married man the law is seldom enforced.

The wise man always looks before he leaps—then instead of leaping into the fire he stays in the frying pan.

You may have noticed that the friends who are willing to lend you money are those who have no money to lend.

One seldom sees a woman on the street without a shopping bag. This should be sufficient warning to old bachelors.

Any small boy knows more about his big sister in a minute than a man can find out during a year of courtship.

The man who marries for beauty always has to dig up some excuse if he would keep on loving her in after years.

If a rich man tells you that the greatest happiness is to be found in poverty, remind him of what David said in his haste.

A good printer is truly a man of the highest type. He attends to his own case and makes it a rule never to be out of sorts.

Home and Health

FASHION NOTES.

Even coat suits show apron and fichu effects.

Yellow is enjoying a vogue it has not known in years.

Brocaded silk is in great demand for girdles and other trimmings.

New street and afternoon gowns are frequently finished with soft, wide sashes.

The square armhole is a feature in one frock of yellow crepe. A guimpe of white crepe is worn with this.

A set worth mentioning shows a hat and neckpiece to match. Black and pink are the colors combined, with steel buttons on hatbrim and buttoning up the cape, coat fashion.

◆

HEALTH NOTES.

When a cut will not stop bleeding apply ground rice or flour. Either one is efficacious.

Hold the hammered finger in water as hot as can be borne for a few minutes. This treament will draw out the inflammation almost at once.

The hair should never be allowed to remain "put up" at night. This is apt to ruin it, and is, besides, not cleanly. It should be taken down at night, well combed and brushed, the scalp massaged and the hair well pulled or weeded out and then braided.

When traveling one should always bear in mind that cinders are apt to find their way into the eyes. An eye cup, a lotion for bathing and a few flaxseed should be included in your package. A boracic acid solution will be found soothing to eyes that are inflamed from dust, wind or foreign matter.

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RECIPES.

RUSSIAN SALAD DRESSING—Add to regular mayonnaise enough tomato catsup to color a beautiful pink. Add a small proportion of pickle, chopped fine. Serve on green salad or fish.

JELLY WITH BANANA CREAM—Cover one ounce of gelatin with one-half cup of cold water and add the grated rind of a deep-colored orange. When soft, stir in one cup of boiling water and one cup of sugar, then stir in two cups of orange juice, strain thru a double thickness of cheesecloth and turn into a border mold. Press two bananas thru a sieve, add one tablespoon of lemon juice and three tablespoons of powdered sugar, beat with a silver fork until very light and fold in one gill of cream, whipped until stiff. Turn the jelly from the mold and fill the center with the banana cream.

CREAM OF ONION SOUP—Two cups onions, two cups milk, one tablespoon butter, one tablespoon flour, one teaspoonful salt, one-eighth teaspoonful white pepper, one-fourth teaspoon grated nutmeg, one tablespoon chopped parsley. Put the onion into saucepan with four cups of water and boil until tender, without a cover; mash thru strainer and return to the onion water (there must be two cups). Put the milk in top of double boiler; as soon as it boils add the onions and onion water. Add the butter and flour, rubbed together, salt, pepper and nutmeg; boil five minutes, add the parsley and serve.

ANCHOVY SAUCE—One and one-half pounds anchovies, one quart strong vinegar, two lemons sliced, flavoring, a tablespoon each of mace, cloves, allspice, cinnamon, nutmeg, onion, thyme, savory or marjoram, with or without cayenne pepper. Stew all together, strain thru a sieve and chill.

◆

NEEDLEWORK.

If you are a lover of the empire effect in chemises you will appreciate this way of obtaining it. Make your chemise as usual, either the straight kind or the envelope variety. Crochet a neat little beading around the top, and then make about twelve or fourteen inches of beading insertion to match the edge. Sew this across the front of your chemise at the high-waisted line, and run ribbon thru it, tying in a bow at the front and sewing the ends where the insertion ends, just to the front of the side seams. You will have the high-waisted effect and a decorative one as well.

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FOR THE HOUSEWIFE.

Be careful to turn out the gas when it is not in use, as even a low flame costs money. After a pot has begun to boil, turn down the blaze to the lowest point without causing boiling to stop. With corned beef or ham the fire can be turned on until the meat is boiling briskly, then turned out for an hour. If meat is securely covered the cooking goes on while heat lasts. For a roast gas can be saved by putting vegetables in the oven, too. All excepting potatoes cook just as well as on top of the stove. With cake only one burner turned low is necessary after the oven has been well heated. In using a broiler the meat should be placed on the back, so that only one burner will be necessary.

To remove tar stains, rub them with fresh lemon, orange peel or butter.

Black walnut furniture or any furniture made of dark wood should be rubbed frequently with a soft rag dipped in paraffin oil, then polished with another soft rag.

One of the necessities in a home is a short stepladder. Many times things have to be reached beyond the height of the worker and a chair in addition to its liability of damage is unsafe to climb on. A short stepladder can be homemade.

WASHABLE GLOVES.

Washable gloves such as women are wearing now are an economy in two ways. Supposing they are white or a castor shade, they give the walking costume a well cared for and dainty air and they are healthy because they require constant cleaning.

The process can be undertaken at home and only demands a few moments' work. Take the gloves (we refer to those made of washable kid, doeskin or chamois); put them on the hands, and, using any white and freely lathering soap, wash them well.

When the gloves are clean rinse them thoroly in fresh water, and then immediately rub on more soap. Let this soap dry into the gloves and it will be found that they will be pliant and comfortable to wear when they are put on.

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TO WASH ORGANDIE.

Organdie, which is very thin and sheer, does not need heavy starching, and it is perhaps better to do all the stiffening of this material with gum arabic. Add two tablespoonfuls of prepared gum arabic water to a quart of lukewarm water and dip the organdie, after it has been dried, into this. Roll the garments into a tight roll and allow to get partly dry. Have ready an atomizer containing lukewarm water and with this atomize the outside of the roll which will be drier than the inside. Iron the starched organdie on the wrong side as far as possible.

CLASSIFIED WANT ADS

SONG POEMS WANTED

SONG POEMS WANTED—FOR BEST OFFER submit manuscript to Needham Music Co., D-44, St. Louis, Mo.

TRAPPERS

SEND FOR FREE COPY OF OUR TRAPpers' Guide and particulars of our Free Gift to Trappers. Hill Bros. Fur Co., 450 N. Main St., St. Louis, Mo.

MUSIC

MUSIC AT WHOLESALE. POPULAR COPYrighted sheet music, full size sheets, words and music complete, [illegible] Satisfaction guaranteed. Frank Herrick, Wahoo, Neb., Box D.

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Send no money. Simply name and address. We will send you, postpaid, 12 boxes of our famous White Cloverine Salve, also 12 beautiful Art Pictures, 16x20 in. Sell the Cloverine at 25c. each and give one beautiful picture free with each box. Return us $3 collected and we will immediately send you six (three pair) beautiful Nottingham Lace Curtains nearly three yards long. You will be proud of them. Everyone buys after you show pictures—stores usually charge $1 each for them.
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We Save You $15 to $25

on a real hand-tailored, made-to-your-order suit—or about half what you would have to pay for an ordinary ready-made suit at your local dealer's. Write us quick and learn how you can get a new suit now—and pay as low as

Only $2.50 Per Month

Send coupon for DeLuxe Book of Styles and full particulars of this sensational offer. When the style book comes, make your selection from the many classy models and swell fabrics. Take your own measure, according to simple directions. Send it to us. In a few days, we'll ship you the swellest, hand-tailored suit you ever laid eyes on, made to your order in one of the latest Metropolitan Styles—from cloth you select yourself.

We Guarantee Every Suit Perfect and Ready in 7 Days

Your suit will be cut by men who are experienced, capable and highly paid. With shears, not by machinery, as ready-made or semi-ready garments are cut. We build your suit separately. We study your figure from the measurements and meet your individual requirements, so that you—whether tall or short, thin or stout—will be fitted perfectly and the suit will be a [illegible] ready for you to wear in 7 days.

Get Our Free Book

It pictures and describes all latest fashions. These models are classiest styles ever seen, having the beauty of line, the drape and hang so much desired by the best dressers in America. With the Style Book we send you cloth samples of beautiful weaves and patterns. This year, same as in years past, the most popular patterns will be found in Stanley-Rogers clothing. Don't fail to have us make your new suit. Our thousands of customers come back season after season for their clothes—a sure sign they are pleased. So will you be.

This Model and Many Others Are Shown In Our DeLuxe Book of New Styles

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to any one who proves that we do not make all garments to the individual measurements of each customer. Some houses try to palm off altered ready-mades or semi-readys, claiming them to be made-to-order. We cut right from the bolt and make up your suit right in our own shop.

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You get the best of everything. You get best fabrics, best French hair cloth interlinings, best serge body linings, best sateen sleeve linings, best buttons, [illegible] material, we guarantee thorough [illegible] a perfect fit. This offer is backed by years of square dealing and a Legal Guarantee Certificate.

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While they last—Beautiful Oxford Gray Wool Cassimere Raincoats, made with new style convertible collar, slashed pockets, [illegible] $2.70 with order [illegible] per month. Satisfaction guaranteed or money back. Write today for yours. Send chest measure for size.

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or postal or letter if you wish—but do it NOW! Get the magnificent FREE Style Book and full particulars of our sensational offer. Book gives you simple directions for taking your own measurements. Don't delay. If you write today, you can get your suit just so much sooner. Our prices save you $15 to $25. Our liberal credit gives you six months to pay. Send coupon for details.

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Please send me, FREE, your new DeLuxe Style Book and full particulars of your great offer.

Name ....

Address ....

City .... State ....

Lone Scout Boys

Or, For Preparedness

By St. George Rathborne

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Begun in No. 42, October 14. Subscriptions can begin with that issue or back copies can be obtained from news stands, our agents or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER III.

PLANNING THE CAMPAIGN.

"WHAT'S the news, Hi Henry? You look as tho some old uncle had died and left you a fortune?"

It was Wee Willie Winkle who asked this question, as in company with Abner Kent he met the tall Scout on the main street of Walden, on the morning following the burning of the deserted factory building that stood close to the schoolhouse.

"Glorious news, fellows!" exclaimed the angular Hiram, who was as typical a specimen of a Yankee as any one would wish to see, and sometimes betrayed his origin by his manner of speech. "The school board has been over taking a survey of the damage done by the fire and the firemen, and decided that it'll take two full weeks to make the necessary repairs. And so we're going to have a vacation we never calculated on. I swan, but it tickles me so much I just feel like whooping all over!"

Both the others looked decidedly pleased.

"Then I expect you'll send around word to all the members of the Tribe, Abner," remarked the Winkle boy, "so we can have a called meeting tonight, and fix on what we want to do to pass some of that time away."

"For one," said Hi Henry, joyously, "I've always wanted a chance to get away in the woods somewhere, about the end of November, when the leaves are off the trees and the first snow expected any time. The hunting is good then, you know, which always pleases me first-class. Up to now all my outings have happened in summer, and it would be fine to get into the woods when game could be made to help out in the eating line."

"A camp at this bracing season of the year would tickle me half to death," admitted Wee Willie Winkle, with a look of delight on his face. "The fire must feel mighty good of a cold night; and say, what a whopping appetite a fellow could develop in the frosty air! I hope we can make all arrangements and start tomorrow."

"We've got everything we need to tote along," added the tall Scout, "including blankets, and two tents if we thought it'd pay us to carry the same, as well as all the cooking outfit necessary."

"It might be just as well," suggested Abner, who had evidently spent considerable time in thinking the matter over, "if we left those tents home this time, and sort of roughed it. To my mind a shack or cabin is ever so much more comfortable when the weather is cold, and there's always danger of a big snowstorm swooping down on you."

"To hear you talk, Abner," declared the Winkle boy, "one would think you had a place in mind right now that filled the bill."

"Perhaps I have," laughed the leader, "but wait until we get together to talk it over tonight. Unless some fellow springs a better scheme, I believe I've got one that will fill the bill to a dot."

He declined to say another word on the subject, and so the boys presently separated, having various errands in town to attend to. Both Hi Henry and the smaller Scout were enjoined to pass the word around to other members of the Tribe with regard to the meeting, so that a full attendance might be counted on.

When the Walden Tribe was organized some of the citizens had taken sufficient interest in the movement to give the boys the free use of a room under one of the churches; tho for that matter the Tribe had no connection with any particular religious body, and the members really belonged to several different Sunday-schools. Here they enjoyed a comfortable meeting-place, where in winter they could have both light and heat without cost, so long as they behaved themselves properly. And thus far not a single complaint had ever reached the ears of the elders connected with the church that had thus been generous toward Abner and his chums; for they conducted their meetings with as much care as most senior organizations could boast.

Here, after supper, the boys began to assemble. They seemed to be in an unusually merry mood, as tho the bright prospect ahead of them gave every fellow gratification. Then, again, it may have been because during the day just past they had been showered with bouquets in connection with their good work of the preceding night; and praise is ever welcome, even to half-grown lads

When the eighth member of the Tribe, Luke Morrison, had turned up, it was seen that a full attendance could be expected. Indeed, knowing as they did that momentous affairs were bound to be discussed, it would have had to be some pretty strenuous matter, such as severe sickness, that could have kept any of those boys from obeying the call for an extra meeting that night.

In fact, altho the regular program was carried out from roll-call down the line, it soon became evident that a free discussion of what to do with this unexpected fall vacation was the main object of the meeting.

Abner called for a free venting of opinions, and a number of projects were outlined, none of which, however, seemed exactly to fill the bill. Perhaps word had secretly gone around that the leader himself had a plan of campaign hidden up his sleeve and the other boys were wild to hear its nature.

"It's your turn now, Abner," suggested Hi Henry, after every one else had had his say, and no settled policy seemed to have resulted.

"I've been waiting until all of you had a chance to air your views," remarked the leader, quietly; "and if some one had brought forward a scheme that seemed to be a gap-stopper I wouldn't bother saying anything more. But since you haven't settled on anything, here's my plan:

"I know of a cabin up near the Canadian line where we could spend a week in the wilderness and have a splendid time. Of course, we'd have to take chances of being turned back if we happened to meet any border guard, because those Canucks just now are feeling pretty sore about the German Fenians, as they call the Americans over here who sympathize with the Kaiser, and who would like nothing better to hit at Great Britain thru Canada. Besides, you know it's really against the game law of Canada for Americans to hunt and fish across the border without permission. But this place is really in dispute, some saying it's on American soil, and others being just as sure it's over the border."

"That must be where you went that other year when that gentleman hired you to help him take wild animal flash-light pictures, eh, Abner?" queried Hi Henry.

"Just where we camped," came the reply, "and even then I made up my mind that if ever some chums of mine wanted to know of a dandy place to spend a little time I'd send or lead them there. If you listen I'll tell you some of the advantages of the camp as I saw them. Then I'd like to have a vote on whether to go up there, or try some other scheme for our vacation."

Eagerly they listened as he went on to explain many of the things he thought were bound to interest his chums. It could easily be seen from the expression of their faces that every one of the other seven Scouts had already decided on how he would cast his vote when the proper time arrived. They knew that Abner Kent was capable of judging the merits of a camping spot better than any other fellow in the Tribe, and consequently they hung upon his every word.

"There, that's enough," said the leader, finally, after he had kept them deeply interested in his graphic description for nearly fifteen minutes. "You know something about the natural advantages of the place, how we can get such game as we would want for helping out the rations, and be able to take some crackerjack pictures with that new camera Hi Henry owns."

"Vote! Vote!" called out several of the boys, eagerly, anxious to have the matter settled beyond all accidents.

"Well, then, after hearing what I've had to offer you, how many say go?" demanded Abner, and instantly seven hands went up.

"It seems to be unanimous," declared the leader, with a pleased laugh; "and so we'll call it fixed for keeps. Now let's decide when we want to get away, what we need to take along, and a few other particulars. To begin with, I'm going to leave the commissary department to Wee Willie Winkle, because we know from past experience that he is the greatest chap going to look after a supply of grub, and what cooking utensils to carry along."

"Besides being the 'boss cook of the whole outfit,'" remarked Ad Porter, doubtless only too willing to throw bouquets if by so doing he could escape some of the labor of providing food for eight hungry Scouts, because it was well known that Ad disliked getting meals, tho he was not at all averse to disposing of them.

"Thank you for the compliment, Ad," said the boy mentioned, making a mock bow; "but I take that with a grain of allowance, as my dad says when mom flatters him after she's just got in her dressmaker's bill. I can see thru a millstone that's got a big hole in it. All the same nobody'll go hungry if the buying of the bacon and stuff is left in my hands, and there's enough cold cash in the treasury department to foot the bills. Count on me to look after that, Mr. Captain."

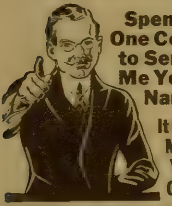
"How about starting out?" continued Abner.

"The sooner we go the better we'll be pleased," declared Cliff Aimwell.

"I wonder if everybody could be ready by one o'clock tomorrow so as to get away?" suggested Abner Kent, who knew his own things were always kept in a state of preparedness so that he could start with half an hour's notice, tho several of the boys were more apt to be neglectful and to fail to look ahead.

It turned out, however, that there was not a single dissent; every one stated his ability to be on hand immediately after lunch, with his pack on his back, and everything else he meant to carry in hand. Accordingly the Captain gave them to understand just what each would be allowed to carry besides his blanket, and certain extra clothes or shoes.

"As we'll have to divide the grub and stuff so every one can have his share of the burden," he went on to explain, "be sure you don't load yourselves down too heavily in the start. To hike seven miles in the afternoon you want to go as light as possible. We can depend on getting some game, and even fish up there, to help out in the eating line. Hi Henry will fetch his camera and gun; Carl must remember to bring an ax well sharpened; I'll have my camp hatchet along. Wee Willie Winkle is



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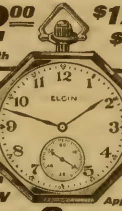

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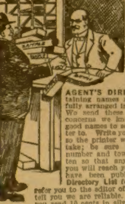

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to make sure of a good supply of matches; and I reckon we'll be pretty well fixed for a stay of a week. I only hope no fellow's folks turn him down so that he'll have to stay home while the rest of us are bent on having the time of our lives.

"D'ye know, Abner," observed Hi Henry, a little later on, "I'm half hoping that we may run across some Canucks while we're up there in the woods. I'd like to see for myself what they look like, now they're really at war with Germany. I bet you they put our Carl here on the gridiron and roast him, if ever they catch hold of him, because they can see with one eye that he's of German blood. They're keeping a close watch for spies along the border, I understand, because all sorts of rumors about blowing up munition plants and such things are in the air."

Carl, of course, heard what the tall Scout said, for Hi Henry purposely spoke in a loud tone. Carl allowed his lip to curl disdainfully, however.

"That doesn't feaze me one little bit, Hi Henry," he remarked carelessly. "I am an American citizen first, and a German sympathizer next. It is not my funeral, this war business, and not for anything would I be caught trying to bring on troubles between Canada and Uncle Sam. So please leave me out when you think that way. My uncle fought with Sigel in the Rebellion, and died for his adopted country. That is what I am ready to do, also. And now if everything is fixed I move it that we go home, because I am as sleepy as all get-out."

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE WAY.

THANKS partly to their excellent principle of preparedness there was not a single hitch in the program. The start was made on time, and every fellow seemed to have his share of the "plunder," as Wee Willie Winkle chose to term the camp "duffle," meaning, of course, the blankets, food, and such things as they knew they should require during a late November outing in the Northern woods.

"I believe you've got every little thing figured out, Abner," remarked Cliff Aimwell, as he strode along at the side of the Captain long after the middle of the afternoon.

"Oh! it's easy enough to do that," the other laughingly told him; "but after all, you've got to fight a lot of unexpected things that keep cropping up from time to time, and cause delay."

"Like Luke breaking his legging cord and having to put a new one in, for instance, I suppose you mean?" continued Cliff.

"Yes, and then there was Ad Porter, who got a pebble in his shoe, and began to limp," the Captain added. "He might have lamed himself seriously trying to keep tagging after us and never saying a word."

"Just like Ad, who is the most stubborn fellow ever born," observed Cliff; "but you chanced to look around and discovered him limping, didn't you, Abner?"

"I wouldn't stand for that sort of stuff a minute," was what the other said. "It was a whole lot better to lose ten minutes getting at the root of the trouble than have Ad fall lame and delay us right along. But with some other things that have happened, one of which I'm ashamed to say was a fault in my little road chart that I thought I'd done perfectly, we are a bit late. We should have reached this place where the forked tree stands half an hour ago."

"What's the answer, Abner?" demanded Wee Willie Winkle, who, striding along manfully close behind the leaders, had overheard all this talk. "Do we get to our destination tonight, or shall we have to make a camp on the way?"

"Oh, nothing so bad as all that, I hope," the Captain assured him. "My plan was that if delayed on the road we might stop and cook supper, after which we'd finish the hike in the dark."

"Nothing serious at all about that scheme, I should think," admitted Cliff; "tho as a rule I always prefer to strike an unknown camping-place in daylight, so as to have a chance to spy the ground over."

"Sure, you're thinking of snakes now, Cliff," mocked the Winkle boy, for that was in fact the one chief weakness on the part of Cliff; "but please remember that the ground has already been frozen, and never a serpent cares to stay out of its winter quarters after the first frost."

"Oh, I know that," declared the other, valiantly. "They lie dormant all winter, and in fact I've found a snake that was frozen as stiff as an icicle; yet they say they'll thaw out as fine as you please and be none the worse for it, which is a regular Sindbad the Sailor yarn, according to my notion."

"On my part," said Wee Willie, "I'm inclined to put some faith in it, and I'll tell you why. Last year when I was down in Boston visiting, I went to the movies at a high school entertainment, and saw a scientific gent show the wonders of this newfangled cold air. He froze two snakes as hard as flint, and dropping one it broke into dozens of pieces. The other he thawed out, and away it wriggled just as much alive as it could be."

"Well, let's change the subject," said Cliff tartly, as he shuddered. "According to my notion there are heaps of topics more pleasant to talk about than just crawlers."

At the next halt the others of the Tribe had to be informed of the slight change in the plan of campaign. No one objected in the least. Whether they arrived at their intended goal at nightfall or three hours later mattered very little to them. Indeed, several were heard slyly to remark that they wished the time was already at hand to stop and make that cooking fire, so that they could find out if that "boss cook," Wee Willie Winkle, had picked up any new ideas along his favorite line since last they were afoot.

At least they seemed to have conspired to keep the Winkle boy anxious to hold the record for being the best cook in the Tribe. These little sops cost nothing, and doubtless caused the boy to feel so proud of his laurels that he would continue to insist upon assuming the main part of the drudgery that went with the preparing of meals.

Later on it was Hi Henry who strode along at the head of the procession keeping Abner company. The keen-eyed Yankee quickly saw that the Captain did not seem quite so cheery as usual.

"What ails you, Ab?" he asked, in an undertone. "You've got something or other on your mind, I know. If you care to tell me I'd like to hear about it."

Hi Henry was always curious. He detected the first hint of a mystery, and from that time forward could never be happy until he had found out the answer to the puzzle. Still, with all his faults, the angular boy was a warm-hearted fellow, and Abner Kent was very fond of him.

"Oh, I don't mind telling you, Hi Henry," he said, with a little sigh. "You see, this happens to be a sad anniversary at my home. My mother always feels blue; and as for grand dad, he sits most of the day and broods. They never seem to get over it."

"Oh, I can guess now, all right," said the other, quickly, and with a note of sympathy in his voice. "This must be the day so many years ago that your father started on his last voyage, when he expected to make enough to retire from the sea?"

"Yes, this was the very day, Hi Henry," repeated Abner Kent, "and we never heard of him or his vessel again. The cruel sea must have swallowed him up. At the time we lived in Boston, but came away a year later, going to Halifax. Then three years back we moved to Walden, and here we have been ever since. You know my folks have only a bare living, counting the pension grand dad draws from the Government, because of the injuries he received in the Civil War. It pulls pretty hard at times, and I expect that I'll have to go to work in another year, for the strain is too much on my poor little mother."

"But gee whiz, Abner. We all know that you're dead set on going to college. It's too bad if you must give that up. Sure, there ought to be some way for you to work your way thru four years of it, if only you had a little help in the start."

"Here, none of that sort of talk, Hi Henry," retorted Abner, quickly, for he was able to read between the lines, and could give a pretty good guess what was passing thru the other's mind. "I would never take a red cent from anybody not related to me if I never got to college."

"But it could be called a loan, you know, Abner, which you'd be able to repay once you got started in a business career; because everybody knows that you'll make a success of anything you tackle."

"That's mighty kind of you to say such a thing, Hi Henry," returned the other, and his voice was not so steady as usual when he said it; "and as for the loan, we'll let that matter rest a while. I might be tempted under certain conditions to accept, if it could be done in a businesslike way. Forget it now, please, and also what I said about this being a sad anniversary for me. I want to chirk up and not have a glum face. By tomorrow it'll be past history, as it is every year, tho I'll never forget my father as I saw him for the last time."

An hour later and the sun was hanging low in the west, promising to take the final plunge at any minute.

"We might as well stop right here where we can get what water we want for our coffee," suggested the Scout leader, pointing to a little brook that still gurgled along its way, tho destined to be icebound before many days had passed, since winter was close at hand.

His announcement was greeted with cheers. Every fellow was both tired and hungry, and when boys reach that stage they yearn to see the sparkle of a fire and smell the bacon and the coffee in course of preparation.

Like magic the loads were cast aside, some of the packs being hung from the lower limbs of a friendly tree. Plenty of wood lay around for making the needed fire, and everybody was anxious to assist in this labor of love, knowing that supper would thereby be advanced.

It was a cheery scene, with those eight boys bustling about, the fire crackling merrily, and its glow dissipating the immediate shadows that had commenced to troop out of the nearby woods. How some of them went about sniffing delightedly at the appetizing odors that

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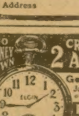

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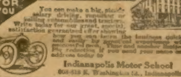

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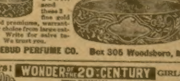

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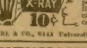

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filled the air! These seemed to bring back half-forgotten memories of other camps where the boys of Walden had sojourned while away on their vacation.

Still, as has been mentioned before, this was really the first experience of most of them in a Maine winter camp, when the trees were almost shorn of their luxuriant foliage, and the breath of Jack Frost hung in the air around them, causing their blood to tingle at times, and a feeling of animation to sway them, so different was it from the lazy summer season.

Finally, after many trials and tribulations, the supper was declared ready, and at that the entire bunch squatted down in a circle to devour their first meal of the trip. All sorts of praises were showered on the head of Wee Willie Winkle. Some of these were really meant in good faith; others were possibly uttered with a sly object in view. The small cook seemed perfectly contented to accept his meed of praise in the right spirit, for he laughed and promised that before they returned home he had a lot of new dishes to spring upon the fellows, some of which would surprise them.

A jolly company they seemed, sitting there and chatting as they ate. When finally the last of the food prepared had vanished, Abner told them they could have half an hour to loll about in, after which the signal would be given to get on the road again.

"Just beyond here we strike a trail that, after a mile or so, will fetch us up at the old cabin where I spent three happy weeks a year ago," was his closing remark.

In due time, therefore, the Scouts assumed their burdens, and made a fresh start. Abner had his bearings, and was not the fellow to overshoot his mark. Thanks to his method of anticipation and preparation, he had made a note of a certain odd-shaped birch tree that overhung the start of the trail, and by this means the latter was readily found.

In single file they moved along thru the woods, Abner in front with a little hand electric torch belonging to Hi Henry to assist him in finding the trail, and the other seven following in his wake as well as the conditions allowed. Now and then some fellow would collide with a tree, or come near falling when his foot caught in a root, but they bore all such inflictions in the right spirit that a Scout should show.

When almost half an hour had passed Hi Henry began to believe they ought to be getting close to their destination. He said as much to the leader, close at hand.

"Once we turn this little crook in the trail and, I remember, we ought to glimpse the cabin," was what Abner told him, and then was heard to give a low exclamation.

"What is it?" asked Hi Henry, quickly, as tho he feared the worst.

"You didn't step on a snake, I hope, Ab?" whispered Cliff, in a horrified voice.

"There's a light in the cabin, boys," said Abner. "I'm afraid it's already occupied."

CHAPTER V.

SCOUT TACTICS.

"WELL, I swan!" ejaculated Hi Henry, in a disappointed voice. "Looks like we're dished for fair, doesn't it, fellows? To come all the way up here, and then find our fine cabin camp occupied! It makes me feel sick, that's what!"

"And if we'd only suspected such a thing," complained Ad Porter, "why, we might just as well have fetched our canvas along and slept under tents, which I take it would be better than in the open, with a snowstorm striking us."

"Oh, for that matter," said Wee Willie Winkle, cheerfully, "what's the use of borrowing trouble, anyway? For my part I'd be glad to have a new experience. A Scout ought to be able to meet things as they come, regardless. It's adversity that does the most in building you up. Any old fish can float downstream, but it takes a live one to fight against the current every time."

"Well said, Wee Willie!" declared Abner, patting the shoulder of the small speaker.

"But what ought we to do about it, fellows?" asked Luke Morrison.

"Who d'ye reckon they can be, Abner?" queried Cliff.

"That's a hard question to fire at me straight," he was told. "There might be a dozen answers and then not exhaust the supply. For one thing, it might be a trapper who located this cabin and saw signs of some fur around the place, just as I told you was the case. He may be thinking of staying the whole winter, and cleaning up the neighborhood of otter, mink, fox and skunks. With the price of pelts almost double what they used to be, it would pay him well."

"Then our grand scheme fizzles, does it, Ab?" asked Hi Henry, disconsolately.

"Hardly as bad as that," he was assured by the Scout leader. "When we start out to accomplish anything as Scouts we have no business to give up so easily. At the worst it simply means a change of plans."

"Bully for that, Abner!" chuckled Wee Willie Winkle.

"I think me the same every time," Carl Betts was heard to mutter, showing that no one seemed disposed to cry quits and start back home again just because things did not happen to be as smooth as they had anticipated in the beginning.

"Then again," resumed the leader, "it may be that a party of sportsmen have taken up lodgings here, bent on having a shoot; for we saw signs of moose when up taking those flashlight pictures last year, and I know there are deer around. In that case we'd have to move on and hunt another field, because they'd make trouble for us here. First come, first served, you know, is the rule of the woods."

"Yes, possession is nine points of the law, they say," remarked Oscar Summerlin, who meant to plead at the bar when he grew up to be a man, for his father was a judge of the local court.

"Well, what are we going to do about it, I'd like to know?" asked Hi Henry. "Do we just walk back again and sleep in the woods, or try to find out first who and what these fellows in our cabin are?"

"That rests with Abner here, I should think," suggested the Winkle boy.

"To begin with," remarked the leader, quietly, "you can drop your packs and take a rest here. As Scouts we must show the proper amount of caution, and take a look in on those chaps before we show our hand. Friends or enemies, it doesn't matter, we ought to proceed with due care."

"Let me go with you, Ab," begged Hi Henry, before any other fellow could get in a word ahead of him, or possibly even think of doing so.

"I'm perfectly agreeable to that," he was told, for Abner knew very well that the lanky Scout had no superior when it came to creeping noiselessly thru the brush and spying on the supposed enemy, a game they had many times practiced in previous camping experiences.

Of course, this meant that the other six were to remain there and await the return of the pair. Once they were in possession of the facts relating to the identity of the unknown person, or persons, who had taken possession of the lone cabin ahead of them, the Scouts could shape their plans accordingly.

"Don't be any longer than necessary, please," ventured Cliff.

"We'll hope to hear good news," added Wee Willie Winkle.

"All we ask of you fellows who stay back here," observed Hi Henry, evidently feeling his importance because he was to accompany the leader on the spying trip, "is that you keep still, and not give things away. Why, how do we know what sort of desperate characters there may be inside that cabin right now? They may be game poachers hiding from the wardens, escaped criminals trying to give the officers the slip, or any old sort of ruffians who would shoot first and investigate afterwards."

"Oh, rats! You're drawing it a whole lot too heavy, Hi Henry!" protested Ad Porter; but it might be noticed that he spoke in a cautious tone, and his whole manner showed that he was impressed with the warning the other had uttered.

"But all the same," Abner told them, seriously, "keep still while we're gone. That is a part of your duty as good Scouts. Look for us back before a great while. Come along, Hi Henry."

With that they departed, bending low and following the crooked trail that led to the woods cabin, which had been the magnet drawing the Scouts all the way from Walden.

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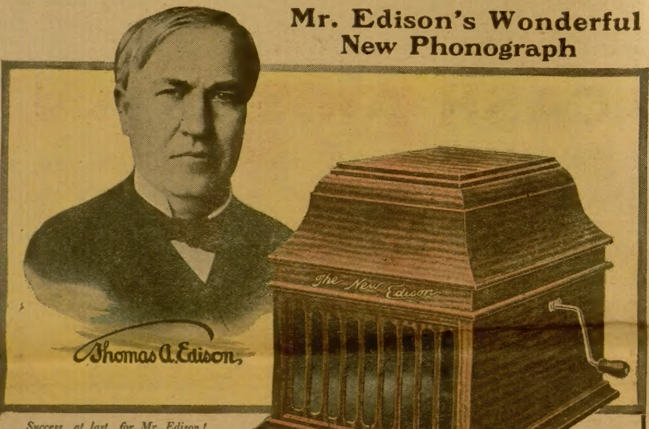

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When at last he had shown her the last roll, he paused in despair.

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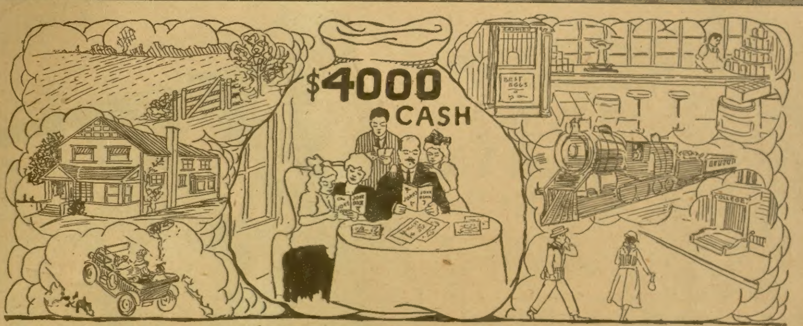
The prospective customer gathered her belongings together and rose from the chair.

"Yes, do," she said with a gracious smile, "and ask them to send you one or two with very small designs, suitable for putting in the bottom of a canary's cage."



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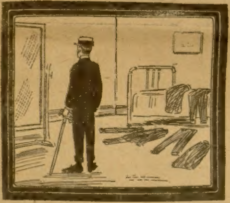

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Educated
One Relief
Up to the Minute
Swelled
No Matter About the Victim
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Always With Him
Cool
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Mere Guess
One Sent
Question
Sign of the Dollar
The Price
Vexatious
Youth's Love
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A Measure of Economy
Some Vastness
Eloping
Corrected
Its Origin
On the Fly
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2—You need the Official List of Titles, from which you pick out titles to fit the pictures, as you must only use titles found in this List.

3—The Reply Book, which permits you to make three answers to each picture, and in which you write down your answers to the pictures. When you have all your answers to all the 24 pictures, you send this book to be checked.

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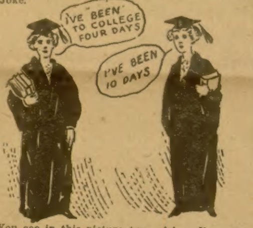
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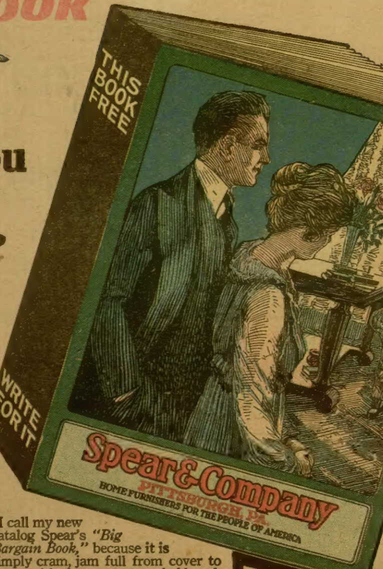

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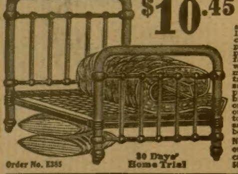

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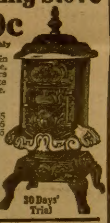

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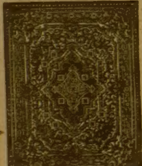

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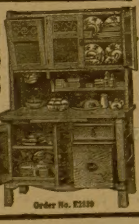

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